Complete Novel by Reginald Wright Kauffm

MAY 10 1924

Everybody's

FIRST IN FICTIO

PERIODICAL ROOM
GENERAL LIBRARY
UNIV. OF MICH.

Univ of Michigan
Gen Libr
Ann Arbor Mich
Nov26R

JUNE 1924

25¢

OSEPH HUSBAND'S
ine, Vital Story
HE CITADEL"

ONORÉ WILLSIE MORROW
HARRIS DICKSON
and Others

"Next to myself I like 'B.V.D.' best"

For its cool comfort, long wear, and famous fit, "B.V.D." is *everywhere* the underwear of men who demand these unvarying qualities in their undergarments

There Is Only One "B.V.D." Underwear
It Is Always Identified By This Red Woven Label

MADE FOR THE
B.V.D.
BEST RETAIL TRADE

(Trade Mark Reg. U.S. Pat. Off. and Foreign Countries)

No underwear is "B.V.D." without this label

The B.V.D. Company, Inc., New York

Sole Makers of "B.V.D." Underwear

"B.V.D."
Union Suit
(Patented Features)
Men's $1.50 the suit
Youths' 85c

"B.V.D."
Shirts and Drawers
85c the garment

Men's "B.V.D." Underwear
in Fancy Materials at
Various Prices

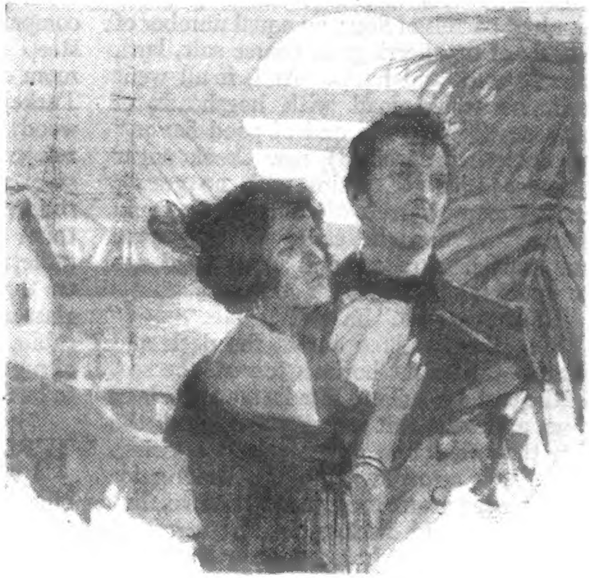
© 1924
The B.V.D. Co., Inc.

Everybody's

VOL. 50, NO. 6 JUNE, 1924 SEWELL HAGGARD, EDITOR

Stirring Adventures on Sea and Land

A Fine, Clean Tale,
Vital and Fresh,
From a Page of History
As Romantic as Any
That Has Been Written



Illustrations by C. G. Gaul

The Citadel

By Joseph Husband

FROM the high bulwark in the waist of the brig John Bush watched the boat of Monsieur Samatan pull steadily toward the shore. Day had ended in a flare of golden flame behind the towering black silhouette of Le Morne du Cap, and with tropic suddenness the night had fallen—a clear transparent night bright with starshine. Under the dark foot of the mountain a few lights in Cap Française shone yellow and distant. The sea was black and smooth and the air so still that faint sounds in the town were now and then audible although the brig swung at her cable a mile offshore. In the unbroken silence of the night Bush heard the creak and clump of the boat's oars grow faint and distant; with his forearms on the bulwark and his square chin resting on his hands he watched it disappear in the shadows of the shore. Forward in the galley the cook began to sing a droning negro melody.

But quite at variance with the peace of the pleasant evening were the thoughts that were troubling the brain of John Bush at the close of this seventh day of December in the year 1814. To be sure he was at anchor, and beneath his feet was the cargo which almost four weeks before he had taken on board at the ice-encrusted wharf beside his uncle's Philadelphia warehouse for delivery at Le Cap in French Haitian Santo Domingo. Like soft yellow stars beneath the mountain were the lights of his destination. Tomorrow, if all went well, he would lie in close to the town and from opened hatches discharge his cargo, five hundred barrels of flour, an equal number of barrels of dry herrings in coarse salt, lard, barrel-staves and hams. And, if all went well, he would load with hogsheads of molasses ("thick, red and of good flavor," his uncle had specified), raw Creole sugar ("coarse, pale red grains with no gray") and as many barrels of coffee as he could obtain. Perhaps he could pick up some soap, and if there was still a credit balance he would take it in piaster gourds.

"If all goes well," he added.

John Bush walked across the deck and studied the bright horizon toward the sea. In the east a headland lifted a smooth black cone, and behind it was a whitening of the sky that told him the moon was rising. There was no riding light on the brig for prying eyes from the sea to observe, but the moon would disclose him; he regretted that he had not anchored closer to the town. Out there to the north, somewhere beyond the empty horizon, was the frigate he had eluded. That was four days ago and perhaps even now she might be at anchor in the harbor of Port Royal. It was more than likely. He smiled as he thought of her swelling canvas and the English flag, a red spurt of bunting that had snapped out suddenly when he had hoisted his own colors. The *Lucy* had shown her heels, and not a shot fired; no need to disclose the presence of her guns as long as the wind held.

If the frigate should suddenly appear? He had anticipated his action. It would be a case of slipping his cables and making a run for it. At all events he would do well to attend to his business with promptitude. Monsieur Samatan had urged it. The lean black merchant had no desire to see a profitable transaction interrupted by British men-of-war. What would they do to Bush? He had shrugged his shoulders, expressing his inability to become concerned; that was Bush's problem. Some rotting hulk, perhaps, or Dartmoor. At all events it would be the end of the Yankee brig *Lucy*, and it would terminate with embarrassing abruptness the career of John Bush, captain and merchant, and also the liberty of the twelve Americans who constituted his crew. Altogether considered, French Santo Domingo was not so safe as the open sea.

Again he studied the horizon. The long black line of the sea stretched unbroken. With sudden resolution he walked to the companionway and ran lightly down the steep stairs to his cabin. It was a large room occupying the entire stern. A heavy Turkey carpet covered the deck and the woodwork was of yellow mahogany. Damask curtains were drawn across the four stern windows and in their middle rose the rudder case, carved and gilded like a Corinthian column. A velvet cloth covered the table, and behind the glass in a large cabinet on the port bulkhead were rows of wineglasses secured in racks. It was a luxurious cabin, more like the quarters of the officer of a great merchantman; a surprising cabin to be found in a brig of 160 tons.

FROM a locker Bush selected a pair of white Kerseymere trousers and a light blue coat, double-breasted, with brass buttons. At a glass inset in the panel of the locker he adjusted his neckpiece and brushed the heavy mass of yellow hair back from his forehead. Unconsciously he regarded himself, a well-built, thin-hipped, broad-shouldered young man of perhaps five-and-twenty, with a fine head, firm-set on a neck that inclined a little too much to heaviness; that was the only fault. His eyes were blue, wide, alert and restless; his smooth-shaven face gave prominence to a mouth large and humorous, and in the corners of the eyes were tiny wrinkles that also denoted humor.

In the self-assured smile and the bright blue coat there was little to indicate the Quaker that he was, or had been until the scandal in the Friends School, a scandal in which John Bush had been the admitted offender, and which had practically severed his relations with his family. But when William Bush had closed the heavy walnut front door literally and permanently on his sixteen-year-old offspring, the equally massive door of his uncle, Matthew Gildersleave, had as promptly opened to the outcast. Perhaps it was because of the old bachelor's affection for his sister, who had died to bring

John into the world, or perhaps it was because of his attraction to the reckless, carefree boy. Probably both motives actuated him. At all events, John found a new home, and a more congenial one. Uncle Matthew limped from a wound he had received under General Anthony Wayne in 1794 when he crushed the Indians at the Rapids of Maumee. He had fought two duels in his youth, and until recent years his business had been of ships, the sea, strange cargoes, and distant places. It was a background that endeared the errant boy to the elderly man.

It had been through Matthew Gildersleave's connivance that John Bush had first seen blue water. They had talked all one night in the high library and the next afternoon he had accompanied his uncle to the counting-house of Mr. Stephen Girard on North Water Street. He remembered the peculiar fascination of the closed right eyelid of the great merchant and he recalled the high bald head, the long nose, and the pointed jaw that seemed to sink into the loose collar about his throat. The result of this meeting was his departure a month later on the ship *Good Friends* to Leghorn and the Isle of France.

In the years that followed, many people and events played a vital part in the formation of the young man's character; but, strange though it may seem, the few women who crossed his path received but little more than a passing glance from his blue eyes. Had he cared to recall the dramatic incidents which so filled his life he would have narrated the story of a pirate attack in Sunda Straits, of a shipwreck the first year he went to sea, on the west coast of South America, of a battle with the Moors in the Mediterranean, and of storms innumerable. He was a man of open skies and plunging seas, inured to hardship, of rare physical strength and endurance. And yet with all the sterner characteristics that comprised his nature there was an emotionalism, elusive but often present, that gave to him a gentleness which occasionally disguised his true self in the eyes of those who did not know him. That he possessed such a quality makes even more strange his unconscious disregard of the women whom from time to time he casually encountered. He was neither shy nor reticent; he was oblivious to all things except the joys of danger and the intoxication of adventure. Probably it was this very masculinity which, having protected him for so many years, caused him at last to love with the same romantic passion that he gave to adventure and the sea.

It was perhaps a little more than two years later when Matthew Gildersleave proposed a partnership and made John captain and half-owner of the brig *Lucy*. In that year war was declared against Great Britain, and for a time on the *Atlas*, privateer, under Captain Moffet, John Bush served an apprenticeship in naval warfare. The experience taught him little that was new to him, but the tremendous game of pursuit and escape or capture appealed to him, and when the *Atlas* went finally to the bottom off the Carolinas, he made his way back to Philadelphia and armed the *Lucy* as his own command under a letter of marque obtained by the approving Matthew Gildersleave. It was a perilous game in the English-infested waters of the Atlantic coast, but luck and daring gave to John Bush on different occasions three rich prizes and more times than he remembered he defied the crimson flag of the English ships from the racing deck of the *Lucy*. That he was equipped by experience for the command must be evident when we consider that in the nine years that had intervened since his separation from his father's household he had spent his life constantly at sea, sailing ships of Stephen Girard to practically every port of the navigable world.

HIS dressing completed, he put out the candles which swung from brass gimbals against the panels and climbed the companionway to the deck.

"Luke!" he called.

From the forecastle hatch a great negro appeared and came toward him with a quick lithe stride that seemed almost animal, a suggestion heightened by the soft *pat-pat* of his bare feet on the deck.

"The boat. I am going ashore."

The black swung over the bulwark and lowered himself to the chains. Then he reappeared, a painter in his hand, and drew the boat forward to the gangway. Bush seated himself in the sternsheets.

"Huggett!" he called.

A man's head appeared above the rail and looked down, peering into the darkness.

"I am going to the town. I shall return in two hours. You know the orders if anything happens."

The head nodded violently, the tarred cue bobbing at his neck. "Aye, aye, sir."

Over his shoulder Bush watched the *Lucy* with a curious emotion that came over him every time he left her. The moon was up and in the soft white light the brig stood sharply defined, a clean-cut hull with two tall tapering masts rising incredibly high above her narrow deck. She had served him well, he thought. The small fortune that he possessed was due to her. If this voyage prospered . . .

The boat bumped against the landing.

"Two hours, Luke. Wait!" The great negro nodded and made a chuckling sound in his throat. He was a mute, for his tongue had been cut off by an officer of Dessalines as punishment for his refusal to disclose the hiding-place of his French master when, the French having been finally expelled from the island in 1804, a general massacre was ordered of all those who were suspected of having connived in the acts of the expelled army. But Bush had discounted his disability in the light of his personal devotion, and for years the negro, a freedman, had served him like a slave.

The landing was dark, and except for the moon the town was practically unlighted. But only three squares from the water-front there was a yellow glow of candles through glassless windows and the persistent strumming of a guitar indicated the location of the Hôtel de la République.

From the door Bush surveyed the room and its occupants. At a near-by table a group of officers of the King sat clustered, their black faces, heavy lips and flattened noses in strange contrast to the gorgeous brilliance of their red coats, bullion-encrusted, and white trousers. Casually he looked about for Monsieur Samatan, but Samatan was not there. He was relieved; there was now no business obligation to detain him.

On a previous voyage to Le Cap, a couple of years past, Bush had met, at the house of Leroy Mangan, one of the white residents, his ward, a dark-eyed, slender girl whose appealing beauty and gentleness had made strong impress on his imagination. In the months that followed, his thoughts had often reverted to those few hours they had had together. Vividly he could recall a ride they had taken along a mountain road to the ruined plantation of Marchegol from which they had looked down over the town and the bay and the plains to the distant mountains. But he remembered less the beauty of the view than the low voice of Virginie Goutier as she had sat erect upon her horse and told him in liquid French words the tragic story of the country's past.

It was she who filled his thoughts during the present voyage, and as each mile of foaming wake ran from beneath the *Lucy's* stern he felt increase in him the thrill of a new adventure, a thrill he had never before experienced, the thrill of a man who goes to meet the woman whom he loves. It was for this reason he had dressed so carefully and come ashore that evening, justifying to himself his impatience by the excuse that he hoped again to see Monsieur Samatan, which was neither true nor necessary. He glanced at the clock. It was too early to present himself at the house of Mademoiselle Goutier's guardian.

He strode between crowding tables to the far side of the room. At one of the small tables sat two negroes. They wore the white linen of the French planters and exhibited flashing jewels on black thick fingers and glittering gold fobs and chains at their waists.

"Ah, Monsieur Bush!" The elder of the two had spied him approaching and sprang from his seat to extend a welcome. "And the *Lucy*, she has carried you here? Ah, it is indeed good to see you, Monsieur le Capitaine."

Monsieur le Capitaine shook hands solemnly with his black acquaintance and as gravely received an introduction to the other. Then he tipped back in his chair and little wrinkles of a smile began to twitch the corners of his mouth.

"FORTUNE seems to have smiled on you, Monsieur Égalité. Perhaps it means that the King recognizes the worth of a loyal subject." He waved a summons to the waiter. "A bottle of French wine and glasses," he commanded.

"And Fortune has not deserted you, Monsieur Bush," Égalité answered. "There is much money to be had by those who carry desired merchandise past the guard of the English ships." He raised his glass to Bush and drank the clear yellow wine. "The King will make this fair country rich again. Great works are in progress. But it will be wealth for the black men." He gave Bush a quick glance from small red eyes. "There will be no more white rule here; no holding of lands by the white men."

Bush nodded gravely. "Perhaps, Monsieur Égalité," he said, "this millennium of which you speak will make difficult such trading business as I would wish to establish here; perhaps you have in mind to have your own ships and your own merchants?"

The negro shook his head. "We must do business with you, in your way." He raised a great black hand, diamonds glittering with fleeting glints in the candlelight. "And we will be friends—but that is all!"

"His Majesty is well?" Bush changed the topic abruptly.

"Ah, yes, and the great fortress of La Ferrière! From the harbor you can see it on the mountain-top. In all the world there is no place more secure from an enemy. It is a monument to the genius of the King."

BUSH lifted his glass. "To the King, Christophe!" The three glasses met above the table.

"And how are Monsieur Mangan and his ward?"

The smile still lurked in the corners of Bush's mouth, but now a singular intensity seemed to pass across his eyes, a fleeting expression, a thought more serious to him than he cared to disclose. The suggestion, however, of a deeper significance to the simple question did not altogether escape the negro and he hesitated, as if from embarrassment, for the answer.

"My good friend, Monsieur Loup"—he nodded to his companion across the table—"can tell you more recent news of your friends. I have myself not seen Monsieur Mangan for several weeks, and Mademoiselle Virginie, it is months since I have seen her so great beauty."

"Monsieur Mangan is well." Monsieur Loup took the conversation. "He is much occupied with the great affairs the King has placed on his shoulders. It is said that Mademoiselle is betrothed to Captain Nicholas."

The glass half lifted in Bush's hand clinked sharply on the table; his mouth set suddenly, a thin straight line above the square jaw. "And who may be Captain Nicholas?" he asked bluntly.

The broad chest of Monsieur Loup expanded and a smile disclosed his huge white teeth and fleshy gums. "Captain Nicholas is a man of much education, Monsieur Bush; for five years in Paris he enjoyed the best advantages of that center of civilization. Here he is an honored officer attached to the bodyguard of the King. He is rich, for the King has conferred on him much land—" He paused, uncertain how to continue, but something more was straining at his lips.

"He is—" Bush spoke as if the words lay dry upon his tongue.

"He is a man of color? Ah, oui!"

"Let us have another bottle of this most charming wine," Égalité hurriedly broke in. "It is so seldom that the daring Captain Bush comes to us." He babbled along confusedly, the French words pouring from his mouth like water from a glass. What he would have hesitated to say, Monsieur Loup had stated with assurance, pride, and probably not without malice. It was seldom that Monsieur Loup could give so stinging a blow to a white man.

"Of course you will understand, my dear Captain, that this is perhaps not, I would say, definitely arranged, but Monsieur Mangan enjoys much wealth and security from the King, and an alliance between the two families could not but be fortunate."

"I have never met Captain Nicholas," Bush interrupted. "He is indeed to be congratulated." The sarcasm in his voice passed unnoticed. "I have known Mademoiselle Virginie but slightly." He rose from his chair. "Monsieur Égalité, it has been a pleasure to have seen you; we must meet again before I sail." He held out his hand to Loup. "And to you I also owe my gratitude for this most interesting information. May I ask you a single question before I go? What sort of a man is this Captain Nicholas?"

The negro dropped his gaze before the steady stare of the blue eyes that regarded him. "Ah, a fine fellow and, as I have said, a scholar." Then the suggestion of malevolence again hardened his black face and he lifted his eyes boldly. "A fair man; yes, quite white," he continued blandly. "A great swordsman and a man of the world; a gay dog, would you not agree, Monsieur Égalité?"

Bush bowed. "Good night, *mes amis*. I regret that I cannot remain longer with you." And with his curious swinging stride he threaded his way between chairs and tables to the door.

For five minutes at least Bush stood in an angle of a wall trying to bring to order the wild thoughts that seethed in his brain. It was very still, a breathless tropic night. The world seemed bright as day but yet illumined by a light that disclosed only its sad beauty. Across the dirt road white walls, crumbled and scorched by flames, were half hidden by vines and flowers. Through the massive iron grille of a broken gate was a courtyard, and beyond were other walls, ruined and blackened beneath their dress of clambering green. Even the wall in whose angle he stood showed the marks of fire and violence. So it was with the whole town, he recollected. A city of ruined magnificence, buried now in luxuriant tropic verdure; a town of flimsy houses, of filth and barbaric magnificence, a town of black citizens ruled by a black despot.

ACROSS the street was the ruined mansion where but a dozen years before had lived Pauline, sister of Napoleon Bonaparte and wife of Captain-General Le Clerc, who with thirty thousand troops had come to restore the island to France. But the yellow fever and the black soldiers of the patriots virtually annihilated the picked troops of Napoleon, and the shattered remnant of the army besieged in Le Cap had finally surrendered to the English fleet in the harbor. All the tragic history of the island seemed pictured in these moonlit ruins: the early days of Spanish rule in the years following Columbus; the era of the French, that era of vast plantations and stone villas among the palm trees; and then the uprisings of the negroes and the vain expedition of the French and English to subdue the liberated slaves. And in the recent years these walls recalled names new to history. Toussaint, the slave who led the revolt; Dessalines, the negro Emperor who followed him, and now Henri Christophe, the King.

In the peace of the night he recalled the stories he had so often heard of that terrible year of 1793 when the slaves of Santo Domingo, rising] against their masters, had made desolate the great plain, burned the villas of the French planters and left Le Cap a mass of blackened ruins. In the general massacre of the whites had perished Virginie's father, Charles Goutier, and the young English bride whom he had but two years before brought home with him from her father's station at Jamaica. What had been the association between Goutier and Leroy Mangan that caused the latter to assume charge of the infant child, Bush had never known. Spared for some reason by the blacks, Mangan had for many years following the revolt held a singular position. He was rich; he was a man of education, a Frenchman, some said a renegade member of a noble family; and he was a friend of Christophe, *le roi* Henri. That he and his wife had faithfully reared the child through her girlhood and provided for her everything that Mangan's great wealth could obtain no one could deny. Then, when Madame had died, Virginie had been sent away for two years' study in France. And she had been brought back to conduct the household of her benefactor, to be finally bartered, a bride to a man of color, a helpless pawn in the intrigue of the black empire of the negro emperor, Christophe.

As he stood in the dark angle of the wall the full horror of the situation began fully to appear to him. The words of Monsieur Loup had come with an abruptness that had stunned him. Now he was thinking more clearly. He saw the tremendous difficulties and he saw too the almost complete helplessness of the girl. Her grave dark eyes and her sensitive red mouth seemed to summon him. A new emotion, overwhelming in its intensity, swept over him.

As he strode down the street, he caught here and there through the broken walls glimpses of the harbor, brilliant in the moonlight. The road led north along the shore: then, turning sharply to the left, it climbed in a gentle grade upward toward the low foothills of Le Morne. Its rutted surface was unclean with scattered refuse that at times tainted the air and mingled its acrid smells with the odor of flowers along the way and the humid night smell of the dense vegetation.

Two gateposts of white stone flanked the entrance to the grounds of Leroy Mangan. Within, the enclosure was black with shade, but the white twist of the drive directed him.

The house, which he could barely see between some giant mangoes, was a two-story building and the balconies which surrounded it were draped heavily with vines.

The black servant announced him and almost immediately Virginie appeared from an inner room. John Bush had remembered her beauty and her gentleness, but he stood for a moment confused and speechless as she walked toward him, her hands almost childishly extended to greet him. She was dressed in white with bare neck and shoulders around which a black lace shawl hung with clinging touch, and against her breast a single poinsettia was caught by a diamond clasp.

"Oh, it is you!" she exclaimed. "How can I tell you how glad I am to see you?" Her voice was low but it possessed a bell-like quality that gave distinctness to her words. She spoke in English with a faint French accent that was altogether delightful.

Bush caught her hands and met the frank gaze of her great dark eyes. Her lips were very red and as she spoke her small even teeth glittered with incredible whiteness. Then a self-consciousness came over him, and he pulled at his square jaw with his hand, a nervous gesture that betrayed his momentary embarrassment. She was lovely, a glorious creature; he had last seen her in her perfect girlhood, but now she was a woman, and in the depths of her eyes he saw an understanding, a realization of something of the problem of the life which in her had reached the perfect bloom.

"IT IS not for one of the Society of Friends to pay compliments to the gentler sex," he laughed, with a twist of his lips as he spoke; "but having so far separated myself, by force of circumstances, from that sect, I will not hesitate to crave your pardon for my awkwardness, which can be blamed to nothing but yourself."

"To me? I did not think you awkward. But if you were, in some way, why do you blame it on me?"

He saw a glimmer of laughter in her eyes.

"Mademoiselle, will you make it harder for me, a humble Quaker captain of a trading brig? Must I tell you why?"

He half seated himself on the table behind him that he might the better watch her as he spoke.

"I require it," she replied.

"Then, it is because I am overwhelmed to find you as you are. In this sad country it is indeed a rose that blooms beneath the roof of Leroy Mangan."

"Is it this Society of Friends that has taught you the phrases of the King's court?"

Bush felt the topic was leading him beyond his depth. "Come," he said. "Can we not sit and talk for a while? I would like to learn of all that has happened to you since we last met. These have been long years, although few."

She beckoned with a slight gesture and they crossed the room to a doorway that opened on the garden behind the house. In the soft light of the dozen candles that burned in a candelabrum within a huge glass globe on the table he saw at his side the white smoothness of her bare shoulders, the fine poise of the slender neck and the curves of her breast that rose and fell beneath the crimson blossom of the poinsettia. Emotion seized him. He dared not think of Nicholas; he dared not mention again the name of Mangan; he felt the cords of his neck tense with anger.

They sat down on a garden seat in the moonlight, each conscious of a vague sentiment that surrounded them, a sentiment young and fragrant as the sweet odors that hung on the still night air. Had he been given to self-analysis he would have recognized the fact that he had fallen irrevocably in love with this slender, dark-eyed girl beside him, that the vague memories of the last two years were tonight crystallized into a splendid reality. Alone in a world of adventure, he had cherished her delicate memory as a man in solitude will sentimentalize about the picture of an unknown and beautiful woman. But here was the reality; the moonlight touched the white shoulders of the girl of whom he had dreamed in those long dark hours when he had paced the narrow deck of the *Lucy*. Beneath those white shoulders was a warm, living body, and in her quick glances in the lighted room he had recognized a woman to whom thoughts of love and romance were frequent visitors.

"ARE you happy, Virginie?" It was the first time he had called her by that name.

She looked at him, startled, her face in the shadow, the moon glinting through her hair.

"Do you know? Have you heard something that made you ask that?"

"Yes. How can I serve you?"

She was silent for a moment. Then her head drooped and she buried her face in her slim hands. "Oh, how alone I am, how miserable, and how helpless! It is his will. There is no escape."

He caught her hand in his, and lifted the fingers, moist with tears, to his lips.

"Virginie, some way can be found. Be brave. Resist a little longer."

There was a sound behind them, a footfall within the house. A chair grated as it was jostled on the floor. A shadow flickered across the candlelight.

Virginie rose to her feet. "Quick, monsieur! We must not be found here. It is my guardian; he has returned early. Can you forget what has been spoken? It is best so."

He leaned over her, his mouth seeking her ear until he felt her hair against his cheek and sensed its fragrance. "I shall never forget. I, too, am alone. But there is a way, and I shall find it."

Leroy Mangan stood, a black shadow, in the doorway.

"Virginie!" he called.

"I am here, uncle." They had risen from the seat and were already on the terrace. "Who do you think is here? It is Captain Bush of Philadelphia; it is two years since we last saw him!"

Mangan bowed stiffly. He was a tall, lean man with a narrow face beneath his long gray hair. The mouth was the striking feature, a small mouth with a loose, sensuous lower lip. His black clothes were severe and unrelieved by ornament except at the throat, where a single emerald in a heavy gold setting gleamed like an eye against the whiteness of his fluted stock.

John Bush recalled the sinister face, but now, in the light of his recent information, it assumed an evil aspect that he had not previously attached to it. He remembered Mangan, not so gray or lean, as an austere, cold man of faultless formal courtesy.

In the awkward pause Virginie felt a situation developing; with an apparently unconscious movement she put her hand on Mangan's shoulder.

"May we not invite the captain to stay with us a little longer? He had hoped to find you. I am sure he must have interesting news of the war and of America."

Mangan took a step to the side of the doorway. "I regret," he said, "that the hour is so late. Captain Bush realizes that conditions at Le Cap are far from desirable for those who walk its streets after sunset. I am sure he will find his ship a more desirable place in which to spend his evenings."

A flare of heat burned in Bush's cheeks; he felt his neck tighten and his hands tremble with anger. For a flashing second his one desire was to strike the expressionless face that calmly regarded him. But all he did was to bow and then to send from his steady blue eyes one penetrating look into the eyes of Mangan. If he had expected them to drop before that look of disgust and hate he was mistaken. The imperturbable face was masklike. For the sake of the girl whose delicate hand rested on this creature's arm he resisted his impulse.

"Mademoiselle," he said slowly, with the quaint drawl of his people, "I shall accept the advice of Monsieur Mangan. It is perhaps best that so pleasant an evening should not last too long."

As he turned to cross the room their eyes for a passing moment met, and in that quick glance Bush read her appeal of entreaty and fear. It was the look of a hunted creature, a look that haunted him far into the future.

JOHN BUSH went ashore the following morning shortly after sunrise, but even at that early hour the heat was beginning to quiver over the marshes south of the town and the air in the streets was hot and lifeless. As Luke rowed him in from the brig he had noticed with interest the square structure that capped one of the high peaks of the mountain range that lifted its serrate wall beyond the flat sweep of the plain, perhaps thirty miles away. It was the great fortress of the King of which Égalité had spoken, a tremendous stronghold perched on the peak of a mountain three thousand feet above the surrounding valleys.

In the strong morning light the town of Le Cap disclosed its squalor and desolation. Everywhere ruined stone walls, smoked and scorched, recalled the onetime splendor of the French city. The

Hôtel de la République was deserted and the dark low room was cool and odorous of last night's hospitality. Bush took a seat by the door and a few minutes later Monsieur Samatan crossed the threshold. The merchant was a tall, well-built mulatto with regular features and straight black hair. His even teeth of glittering whiteness emphasized the frequent smile that hovered beneath his waxed mustaches, and a small goatee gave to his fine thin face an air of distinction. Monsieur Samatan was perhaps fifty years old, a man of culture, of immense power in the community, due to his wealth and the high regard which was everywhere accorded him. He wore a striped blue and white suit of fine linen, and as he sat down across the table from Bush he removed the huge straw hat which almost concealed his face beneath its voluminous drooping brim. For an hour they discussed the negotiation of the *Lucy's* cargo and, arriving at terms mutually agreeable, sealed it with pale rum and water.

Five days later John Bush again found himself in the Hôtel de la République. During those five days he had labored relentlessly, and not only was the *Lucy's* cargo now safe in the ample warehouse of Monsieur Samatan but already a small part of the coffee he had purchased was between the decks. With Huggett he had worked his none too safe crew and the gang of black roustabouts far into each night, for every passing day increased the possibility of a sail, and if one were sighted the chances were strong that she would fly the flag of England. To cut and run would in such an instance be imperative although hazardous; to remain would spell instant capture.

In these five busy days Bush had not again seen Virginie Goutier; but the thought of her was never long from his mind. Time did not heal the smart of Monsieur Mangan's discourtesy. He had restrained himself that evening when Mangan had shown him to the door, with the realization that only evil could come from violence and that Virginie's happiness and safety would be jeopardized by an open break between himself and her guardian.

It was seven in the evening when he left the warehouse of Monsieur Samatan with the intention of going immediately on board the *Lucy*, which was now anchored no more than half a mile from the landing. But as he turned down the long straight street that ran parallel with the water-front he saw black clouds piled high against the distant mountain and the flicker of lightning warned him that within perhaps half an hour a tropical storm would break over the town. Such storms were always of short duration but of extreme violence. He glanced at his fine blue coat with its gleaming buttons; it would not be well to let this, his best apparel, suffer from the downpour. Three squares away the Hôtel de la République suggested friendly refuge. There he could dine until the rain was over.

THE long low room was crowded and the air pungent with tobacco smoke and the smells of cooking. Officers of Christophe filled the tables, gay uniforms contrasting with the striped suits of cotton or linen of the civilians. All were black; black ranging from ebony to a light tan. French was their speech, a hum of Gallic words like the sound of swarming bees.

At the table next to Bush five men were dining, and he watched them with idle interest. The bottles were opened with increasing frequency and their voices grew proportionately louder as they drank. They were in uniform, officers all, and from the heavy bullion on their green coats he identified them as probably attached to some crack regiment of Christophe. They were discussing the King's great fortress and their ignorant boasting amused him. Then the talk turned to the King's court at the Palace of Sans Souci and the coarse stories of licentiousness filled him with a disgust that might have been read in his face.

One of the five, a short, effeminate-looking mulatto, rose unsteadily to his feet. With amusement Bush watched his swaying figure and the filled glass in his unsteady hand slop its contents on the man at his right. He began to address a companion across the table, a man whose face Bush could not see; but he had noticed the fine build of the broad straight shoulders beneath the trim coat and he had wondered at the whiteness of the skin as he observed its color beneath the straight black hair that was tied with a bit of ribbon at his neck.

"Mon cher Nicholas—" said the little man. Like a slap across the face the name galvanized Bush into rigid attention. "The impending marriage," the mulatto babbled on drunkenly, and then sat suddenly down. From his chair Nicholas rose heavily and lifted a brimming glass. He was affected by the wine that he had been drinking, but he was still in command of himself.

Leaning across the table, Bush strained his ears for the words. Nicholas was responding to the toast. In the most polished French he recounted a coarse story. The very refinement of his voice and manner magnified its grossness. His comrades were laughing immoderately. He was still talking. Suddenly from his lips fell a sentence that for a moment made Bush sit rigid in his chair. Clear above the tumult of the room he heard the name of Virginie. The vile boast of this cultured half-breed about the white girl whom he was to wed burned like fire across the brain of the Philadelphian.

With a single movement Bush leaped from his chair. There was a crash of shattered china and the small table rolled across the floor. Nicholas turned toward him a heavy white face, and between the startled eyes Bush's fist smashed like a hammer and he saw Nicholas drop at the impact across the table-top. There was momentary silence, then tumult filled the room. Every one was standing, jostling to catch a better view. The little mulatto was screaming vile words in a high, shrill voice. An ominous note grew stronger in the roar of voices. From the table Nicholas was being lifted to his feet, his face smeared with bright red blood. A thin sword blade glittered at the side of the mulatto, and Bush saw a knife in the hand of the officer who had sat at the left hand of Nicholas. The mulatto was edging his way around the table, the thin blade gleaming in the candlelight.

Bush could not have recounted coherently what happened in the three or four minutes which immediately followed. As a white man, he was at best barely tolerated at Le Cap; it required only some act such as he had just committed to turn everything against him.

There was a rush toward him. A pistol roared like a cannon; a bullet grazed his ear, and a pall of powder smoke stifled him. With his back to the wall he swung the chair in which he had been sitting and saw the face of the mulatto sink suddenly beneath it. It was a chair solidly built and again he swung it in a half-circle that cleared an open place before him. He was now near the door. A black hand reached for his throat. He snatched a table knife and stabbed blindly. There was the door! The crowd was pressing forward. With his left hand he groped for his pistol; his fingers found it; he leveled it at the crowd.

"The first man who crosses that door I'll kill," he shouted.

Then he slipped around the door frame to the street. The rain was falling in a deluge, the road was a quagmire. From the sky the lightning quivered in recurrent green-white flashes. How long would they wait before some one followed him through the door? A minute at the most. That would be his start. He ran as he had never run before, for death followed. There were no passers on the street, but here and there a light shone in a house. The rain beat against his face; in the glare of the lightning he saw the road as through a silver curtain of falling water, black-gleaming with muddy pools.

The pistol was still clutched in his hand but the priming was wet and it was worthless. He glanced over his shoulder. In a quivering flash he saw a crowd of black figures about the door of the inn. He dodged around a corner. There was the landing!

"Luke!" he shouted. The mute stepped out from the shelter of a shed.

With the negro he scrambled down to the landing stage and flung free the painter. Already Luke had the oars in the water. The boat shot forward and the dock disappeared in the blackness. In the far distance Bush heard cries and the sound of pistol shots. For the time being he was safe.

THE morning was glorious. Cool and steady, the offshore wind drove the *Lucy* northward across a sea of unbelievable blue, beneath an azure sky. On the poopdeck John Bush watched with half-shut eyes the retreating coast line of the island.

With the vestige of a smile in his blue eyes Bush recollected the incidents of that crowded evening of yesterday. Huggett had been waiting at the top of the ladder when Bush climbed on board. In the faint gleam of the anchor light his black tarpaulin glistened like glass in the downpour, a varnished straw hat threw his face into complete shadow and dripped water like a gutter.

Bush had come to the point hurriedly. The rain was stopping. On the shore more lights were moving about. Before long a boat would unquestionably be put off. If he refused to let them on board they might try to take the *Lucy* by force.

"Get the men on deck and make sail."

He measured with his eye the distance to the shore and studied the direction of the wind. It was blowing strong and directly out to sea. No time to weigh anchor. The wind would keep her offshore; they could put sail on her while she drifted. He picked a boarding ax out of the rack and went forward. As he ran, the boatswain's pipe was trilling and a sound of voices came from the forecastle scuttle, voices of men awakened from heavy sleep. There was much swearing; then he heard them coming up the ladder to the deck. With a stroke of the ax he severed the starboard cable at the hawse-pipe, and the *Lucy* was free.

Some one had fired a gun as they drifted past the town. The stars were out again and shone on the great gray foresail that was already swelling in the breeze. They were in plain view now, the ghost of a ship sliding faster and faster over a black sea in the starlight. Then from behind the flying clouds came the moon. Far astern a longboat lay with idle oars in the soft light. He was out of it none too soon.

Bush came out of his reverie with a start; it was Huggett's voice at his shoulder. "We're all clear of the land, sir. How shall I steer?"

For an hour, while he watched the receding hills, that question had been uppermost in his mind. "Lay her well north of Tortuga and then make for the Mole," he answered. Then, squaring himself until he faced the stolid countenance of Huggett, he continued in a lower tone: "I don't know what the men think, but let it be as they will. They know well enough about what happened. I want you to know the whole yarn though, Mr. Huggett, but not now. We are going to the Mole for more coffee. That sounds reasonable, and there may be some there. Perhaps I'll have you take the brig home without me." He gave a swift glance at the distant shore. "I'm deep in something serious, Mr. Huggett. I'll ask you to serve me in your best style."

Huggett's red hand hitched at his waistband. "Captain, you ain't found Tom Huggett lacking yet." Out of the corner of his eye he caught the man at the wheel. "Keep her away there," he roared, as though repeating an order received from the captain. "Set the topsail, ye lubbers. Lively now, loose the topgallant sail."

The *Lucy* was heeling over in the breeze, her windward shrouds taut as wires; and a wake of creamy water was reeling from beneath her graceful stern. She was fast—a graceful, narrow hull with fine, sharp bows and a clean run. Her flush decks were level and white from the constant application of sand and holystone, and above them rose her masts tall and slender, tapering to the trucks, slim sticks against the sky. Forward, the bowsprit reared with every sea, a long finger almost disproportionate to the size of the brig. Her bulwarks were high and substantial and were pierced on each side with two ports behind which, securely lashed to rings, were carronades covered with canvas. Aft on the fine stern was a long gun with a traversing slide inset in the pine deck. She was coppered to the bends and as the wind caught her towers of canvas the burnished metal held the sunlight like fire and reflected its flame on the racing sea.

"SAIL astern!"

The men sprang in unison from their various occupations into the main shrouds, and scrambling up the ratlines peered from that greater height at the heaving horizon.

"There she is!" some one shouted.

Huggett ran hurriedly to the cabin hatchway. "Sail astern, sir," he repeated.

Almost instantly Bush's head and shoulders crowded up through the narrow opening. He was bareheaded and carried under his right elbow a leather-covered brass spy-glass.

"What is she, Mr. Huggett?"

"Can't make her out, sir. Aloft there!" He took a voice trumpet from its catch beside the wheel and bellowed through it at the lookout. "How does she bear? Can you make her out?"

High against the blue sky the main truck darted in great swings with every lurch of the brig as if it sought to shake from his perilous place the watching sailor who clung there.

"Hull down!" came the small, distant voice.

"Keep her off a point; steady there!"

"Steady," echoed the man at the wheel.

Already the yards and rigging were alive with men, their eyes fixed on the white speck which now and then lifted above the horizon. From the poop Bush studied it through his glass.

"Mr. Huggett," he called. "See what you can make out of the mainyard." With surprising alacrity, the stocky figure of the mate scrambled up the taut weather shrouds to the maintop. For a long minute he peered from beneath hand-shaded eyes. "Hard to make her out," he finally reported. "She's on our course, I think."

The *Lucy* was heeling over sharply under the press of her canvas and from beneath her sharp cutwater the blue sea was swirling past her sides in a seething mill-race of foaming water. Every sail was stiff with the force of the wind and from the wire-tight shrouds and stays came the hum of harpstrings.

By noon the wind was blowing in heavy squalls that tore across the rising sea, churning its surface white with the crests of the waves and flattening it out beneath its touch. At each onset the *Lucy* settled as if pushed down by a giant hand, flying before the fury of the wind until every spar seemed bent to the breaking point. Now and then a heavy sea slopped over the dipping bow to send aft a torrent of soapy green water that sloshed back and forth until the sucking scuppers could carry it away. She was carrying every sail possible, for already the foretopsail had been carried away with a sudden roar of bursting canvas. Bush was taking no chances of capture. In the speed of the brig he was confident. If there were no unforeseen accidents he should be able at least to maintain his distance until nightfall and then it would be easy to elude the pursuer.

He ate hurriedly in his cabin, gulping the hot, bitter coffee until his throat was scalded. Again on deck his eyes watched fixedly the sharp, white object that now appeared well over the horizon. Whatever she was, she was now clearly gaining. He studied his bending masts and crowding canvas. The *Lucy* could carry no more with safety, of that he was certain.

Braced against the white-painted rail of the poop, Bush watched his pursuer, and now and then gave a terse order to Huggett or directly to the seaman at the wheel. Two hours after the sail had been sighted the lookout had hailed from above that she was now in full view and bearing up steadily, and half an hour later Bush made her out clearly from the deck—a corvette, undoubtedly, and racing handsomely under full sail before the wind.

At four o'clock came a slight let-up in the following gale. The corvette was now in plain sight, and the men watched her with tense interest from various points of vantage. She was boiling through the sea, a white bone in her teeth, her clear black bends and white streak clearly visible. Now and then as she heeled under a sudden flaw her bright copper from stem to stern caught the flash from the setting sun, a sharp contrast to the tower of white canvas that swelled above her deck.

THERE was a sudden yellow spurt and a puff of white cloud from the forward deck of the corvette, and after what seemed a full minute came the dull report of a gun across the water. The shot fell short, far astern of the *Lucy*, with a plume of white spray torn from the blue water.

"Clear away the stern-chaser."

At the sound of Bush's voice the men sprang at the long stern gun with an energy that had been steadily accumulating during the last few hours of inactivity. In a trice the canvas was whipped from the black barrel and the gun trained along its slides on the pursuer. Suddenly from the peak of the corvette fluttered a spurt of red against the sky, the red cross of England, a flame against the blue.

"Hoist the colors!"

With a rush the quartermaster ran to the halyards and a moment later the stars and stripes broke from the peak. With unconscious enthusiasm Huggett swung his straw hat above his head.

"Give 'em hell!" he bellowed. "Shoot straight, boys!"

A white squall bore down over the water, and the *Lucy* dived forward with a maddened plunge, and a cloud of spray, mounting like a mist to the foretop and driving aft, drenched the men in the waist. A cheer followed. The madness of the fight had seized them.

"All ready there?"

"All ready, sir." Stripped to the waist, his black straw hat jammed close about his ears, Huggett balanced on bare feet on the swinging poop.

"Fire!" There was a flash from the long gun and a rush backward of the heavy carriage; a dense cloud of white sulphurous smoke enveloped them.

From the corvette two spurts of flame spat from the main deck and a puff of white smoke bent aft and clouded the hold. But now instead of the following report of distant guns a crackle of splintering wood from the mainmast and a shower of white splinters rattled on the deck. Snatching his voice trumpet, Huggett bawled his order and the men swarmed up the shrouds to the damaged mainyard.

Bush thrust his glass in an angle of the cabin skylight and ran to the side of the steersman. "Keep her off," he shouted, his voice straining to compete with the roar of the flapping mainsail. "Loose topgallant sails, Mr. Huggett. Crack on all you have. Stand ready to rip the booms out, if the wind fails us."

Again leaning against the rail, Bush studied his pursuer. Once more came the spits of yellow from the gun reports and the white clouds of smoke from her decks, and a second or two later the round shot screamed past the Lucy a full hundred yards off the starboard.

"Clear away the larboard guns!" Again came the rush of bare feet on the rearing deck. Around the guns the men clustered, naked except for their trousers, black-tarred cues against sunburned necks, tattooed hands fingering lanyards and breechings.

"Starboard your helm! Bring her round!" Bush's words were low but clear and the men at the carronades heard him as distinctly as the steersman whom he addressed. They were a mere handful at best to meet such an adversary, but the broad backs and muscular arms promised at least a lively action if the engagement came to hand-to-hand quarters.

"Aim for her spars!" Bush shouted through his trumpet. Slowly the *Lucy* rolled in the grasp of a great wave, higher and higher, her trucks sweeping a wide arc against the sky. For a second she steadied and then began slowly to roll back to starboard.

"Fire."

There was an almost simultaneous roar from the carronades and the crash of carriages recoiling against the breechings. A dense smoke poured over the decks and then shredded away like fog to larboard. A tense second passed, then a yell of exultation burst from the men. Slowly it seemed, the tall foretopmast of the corvette bent forward and, borne by the great white courses, collapsed, sails streaming in the water over the bows. But even while this was happening the corvette swung sharply to starboard and her long pierced side came into view.

"Up with your helm there," Bush roared. "Put her into the wind."

SLOWLY the *Lucy's* bow swung to the rudder's urge, but it was too late. From the high dripping side of the corvette a sheet of flame flashed and a few seconds later a hail of metal screamed across the *Lucy's* decks. From the bulwarks slivers of white oak rattled on the planks and the crash of splintering wood below told Bush that his ship had been hulled, perhaps badly. By rare fortune the rigging was practically uninjured, but a few jagged rents in the now filling sails gave suggestion of the closeness of the escape. She was running full before the wind again, and the water was flooding past in a churn from her pressing bows. Bush regarded the corvette. She was helpless as far as pursuit was to be feared. Once more the black ports of her larboard battery belched their smoke clouds, but the shot fell far astern in an irregular line of feathery jets of water.

Bush looked forward along the deck. The guns were in and the men were ramming home the wadding. The white planking was black with trails of powder and cluttered with rammers, gun swabs, sponges and powder buckets. In the waist beside one of the carronades a limp figure was flung against the deck and with each pitch of the ship little dark rivulets ran from beneath it, filling the grooves of the gun slide and trickling off into the scupper. Across another gun forward three more bodies were doubled limp and lifeless.

The light was fading rapidly and the

corvette, now far astern, gleamed white in the level rays of the setting sun. His face and body black with powder, Huggett came aft to where Bush was standing beside the wheel.

"Luther and three of the hands are killed, sir," he commented in a dry, even voice; "and Mogridge has a cut in the shoulder—a flying splinter, looks like." He studied the corvette in the offing. "I guess we can slip her before they can rig new spars, eh?"

Bush nodded. "The night will save us," he answered. "When it shuts in we can run to southward and take our course again at dawn. Serve the men grog, Mr. Huggett. If anything happens inform me instantly. I am going below to inspect the hull. We were struck. Did you feel them?" He did not await the answer but pushed back the hatch cover and slowly disappeared down the ladder to his cabin.

The wind had fallen slightly with the night's coming and now the *Lucy* swung more steadily ahead, a dim gray bird soaring across a sea of blackness toward the still glowing west. From the deck came the sound of washing down, the clatter of gun gear and the occasional fragment of some brief conversation. No lights were visible but the starlight brightened the planking and cast heavy shadows of blackness that moved ceaselessly with the movement of the brig.

The carpenter came aft hurriedly, his dull face twitching. "There's four feet of water in the forward well, Mr. Huggett, and five aft. She's takin' water fast."

A light in Bush's cabin glowed up through the open hatch. As the two men stood silent, considering this new predicament, the captain's feet sounded on the ladder steps. He was back from his inspection; he would bring more information.

"Carpenter," he called, as his body loomed up from the hatchway, "and you, Mr. Huggett, lively now. There's bad business here. She's hulled in two places, forward, betwixt wind and water. See what you can do with a plug, Johnson. Mr. Huggett, have you the pumps manned instantly. How are the wells?"

Huggett repeated the carpenter's message.

"The water's pouring in forward. It isn't the shot hole that's bad. Three planks are splintered." He held up his arms and wrung the water from the wide cuffs of his coat. "If we can't stop them, it will look bad by morning, Mr. Huggett." His eyes swept the dark horizon to the east. "We've lost the corvette, anyway, for the time being, at least."

A MEDLEY of thoughts occupied the brain of John Bush on this peaceful tropic night. Beneath his feet a sinking ship was swinging swiftly on through the stillness and the moonlight. Around him were men, many of whom he could rely on; but of their number were some whose loyalty he questioned. Far astern was the corvette, now no longer a menace; but the thought of her recalled the limp, mangled bodies behind the splintered bulwark—good men they were, whose devotion to him had never wavered. Far behind was Le Cap, and in that ruined city were men and a woman who had already bent and diverted the whole direction of his normal life.

Yes, that was the answer! It was she, that slim, dark-haired girl with the anguish in her brown eyes who unconsciously was the cause of all these mad adventures. What could the future hold? If the ship could be kept afloat they might make the Mole, or perhaps Tortuga would be safer. And then? Death had been almost miraculously avoided at Le Cap; death awaited his return. Again the hunted look in the deep brown eyes pleaded with him. Death? Yes, death threatened, but blind unreasoning love called to him. "Within two weeks," he said slowly to himself, "I shall return to Le Cap."

The carpenter appeared from the shadows and stood in front of him in the moonlight, the water dripping from his clothing and making dark puddles about his bare feet.

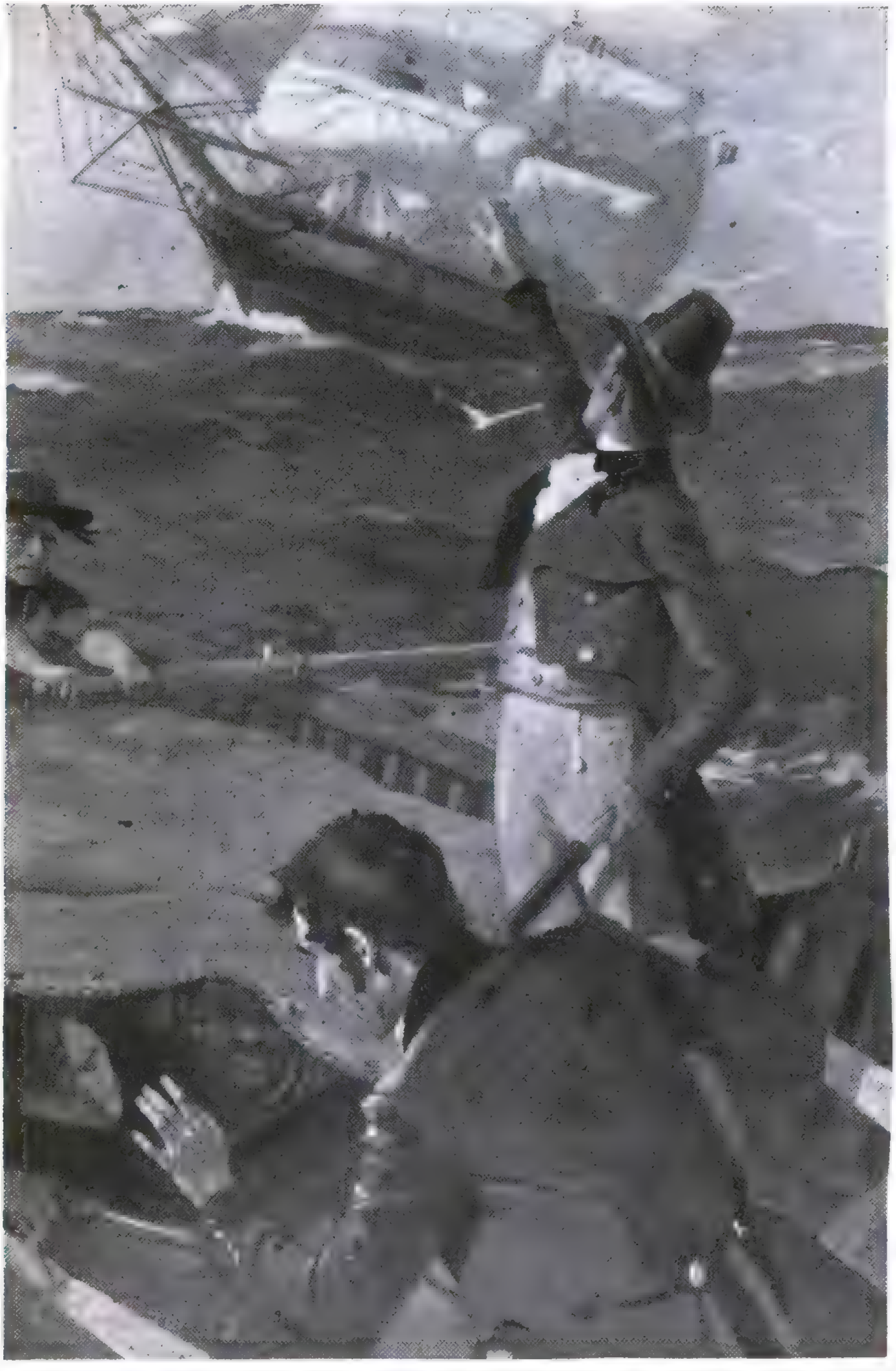
"We've plugged one hole, sir," he said slowly as though winded by his recent exertion, "but t'other one forward is under water; it's the worst one. She's sprung and it can't be handled afloat. The water's gaining fast!"

"The pumps?" Bush queried. Huggett had joined them and supplied the answer.

"The water's coming in twice as fast as we can pump and bail. It's looking desperate, captain."

"How long do you think she will float?"

The mate pondered for a minute. "Perhaps six hours, perhaps longer. But there's



Bush passed the information on to the crew. "She's English! Not a sound there until I give the word. A surprise is our only chance."

not enough able men to last beyond that. There's two wounded men and Mogridge. We're short-handed, anyway."

"Serve double grog and make the longboat ready. I shall set the course for Tortuga. The longer we can keep afloat the nearer we shall be when the time comes to leave her."

It was four o'clock in the morning when Bush gave the order to bring the ship about and to lower the longboat. For the last three hours the brig had labored heavily and had settled gradually until her bow now sank deep into every swell.

Silently they passed down into the longboat that now swam almost invisible in the shadow of the brig the necessities that the next few days would require—food, water, guns and cutlasses, powder, a compass, sails, spars, and other gear. Carefully, the two wounded men were lowered to a place amidships, and a minute later Mogridge was assisted over the side, his left arm bound to his body with some strips of bloody canvas. In a small chest Bush had packed those few articles that he felt he would require, and with an almost overwhelming emotion he turned finally to the companionway and gave a last glance at the cheerful cabin gleaming in the candlelight.

At a safe distance from the sinking ship the men rested on their oars. No one spoke. The tragedy that was being enacted before their eyes cast a depression over them, a depression that heightened when their thoughts turned to the uncertainties of the immediate future. The air was damp and Bush drew his cloak about his throat. With eyes tired by the strain of the last twenty-four hours he watched, as though in a dream, the ship that represented all the material fortune that life had given him. And yet it was not the thought of this abrupt turn of fate that distressed him; it was rather the realization that through the loss of the *Lucy* his return to Le Cap had become difficult, if not impossible.

Huddled low in the longboat, the men watched the brig. There were thirteen of them all told; Bush, Huggett and Mogridge, two seamen, of whom one was the cook, and two others who were so cruelly wounded that it was doubtful if they could venture and endure for another day. Seven able hands in other words, in addition to the two mates and the captain. From the sternsheets Bush regarded them and pondered the problem that faced him.

"She's going by the head," said a voice.

BUSH turned his eyes toward the *Lucy*. Already she was awash forward, her striker buried in the sea, the water high above her hawsepipes. A muffled crash came from her decks—a hatch burst open by the air pressure beneath. Steadily her head settled until the rudder was lifted clear of the sea and the water glistened beneath her keel. Then, at first almost imperceptibly, she seemed to drive forward; faster and faster came the movement, higher and higher the stern lifted. There was a second dull rumble of a bursting bulkhead, and then smoothly and silently the brig slid bow-foremost beneath the surface and was gone. A minute later a little wave rocked the longboat. The ocean was deserted; unbroken, the horizon swept its complete circle under the fading night sky.

In a low voice Bush spoke to the men who, still fascinated, were watching the spot where the brig had disappeared. "To the best of my knowledge," he said, "we are about a hundred miles north of Tortuga. Caicos Island is near us on the north, and there are other islands at hand, but there we would not be certain of water; for the most part they are not inhabited and we would run small chance of rescue. It is best to head for Tortuga." He paused for a moment to let them consider what he had said. "We have food and water for a week, at least, but it may be longer before we reach land, as the wind may be against us. Meanwhile, we shall be in dangerous waters. There is a chance, of course, that an American ship may sight us, but for every such chance there are five chances that we'll be sighted by an Englishman. As you all know, these waters swarm with them." Again he paused and once more he continued but now in a slightly higher and firmer voice. "You will remember, men, that you will continue to look to me and to Mr. Huggett and Mr. Mogridge for your orders with the same obedience that I have required of you in the past. I will have no complaining; our safety lies in your obedience."

From a pile of boat sails in the bottom of the boat, one of the wounded men cried out suddenly in a delirium of pain. Bush felt his way through the darkness and knelt beside the twisting body. His strong, cool fingers brushed the matted hair from the boy's hot, wet forehead. With almost womanly gentleness, he slipped an arm beneath the slender shoulders and steadied the head against his breast. The right arm was gone, carried away by a round shot, and the stump had been crudely stopped with a rope tourniquet.

"Water, for Christ's sake, water!"

The boy's voice quivered with pain. A few feet away a man was already filling a can from the nearest breaker. Bush felt the body in his arms tremble; the lips straightened spasmodically and a gurgling sound like inarticulate words came deep from the throat.

Gently he let the body sink to the pile of sails. "Never mind the water," he said, in a quiet voice.

What little breeze there was came from the south, a faint elusive air cool with the dampness of the night sea. At the order, the men put out their oars and Bush headed the boat into the wind. With even cadence the steady sound of the thole-pins mingled with the occasional splash of a dipping blade and the constant gurgle of the water past the low bow. Four men, bent black figures, manned the oars, while the others slept; in the sternsheets Bush watched them, and now and again scanned the empty horizon. In the cloudless sky a planet burned with white flame, stars in myriads whitened the deep vault of blue except where the moon with her radiance eclipsed their lesser light. The hours passed. Then the east began to pale; day was at hand.

IN THE early morning following that night on which John Bush had so hurriedly put to sea, Virginie Goutier awakened from her quiet sleep with a presentiment of evil. Cheerful sunshine flooded the room and shone like a golden haze through the white gauze curtain of her bed. The air was still, but little familiar household sounds came faintly to her ears. Peace seemed to brood over the roof of Leroy Mangan.

Then to her awakened brain came sharp as dagger thrusts the terrifying thoughts—would Pierre Nicholas attempt to consummate the wedding which her guardian had sanctioned before she could effect her escape, and had some misfortune fallen upon John Bush, in whom she recognized her only possible deliverer? Four days had passed since she had seen the hated face of Nicholas, but it was almost as long since that evening when Bush had been requested by Leroy Mangan to leave his house. What could be the significance of this silence? Had the aroused antagonism of her guardian followed the young American beyond the gate? She knew only too well how cheap was death and how silently it could appear in the Santo Domingo city. She flung her face against the pillow, dry-eyed in the terror of her thoughts.

To Virginie Goutier the Philadelphia captain had come clothed in all the romance of her dreams. Never had she forgotten his stalwart figure and smiling face since the first day that they had met. In the months that intervened she had built around his memory the attributes of all the lovers of history. In the secluded garden of her life he had become her constant companion; he was the embodiment of all that earth held of bravery and gentleness and passion. . . .

But long days had gone by since that night, and still no word from him. Had something happened to him, or was he secretly planning some daring move for her rescue? To relieve her anxiety she played with the latter thought, but through the fascinating romance which her fancy wove came again and again the prodding fear: Life was so cheap in Le Cap.

She breakfasted early and alone. It was customary for Leroy Mangan to drink his chocolate in bed and to arise late in the morning. In obedience to her order her carriage was waiting before the door. She gave the coachman her instructions and leaned back among the cushions.

The horses came to a stop before the warehouse of Monsieur Samatan. From the steps she could see all of the harbor. No vessel rode at anchor on the smooth water or rested against the wharves. Somewhere and for some reason the brig of John Bush was gone.

Napoleon Samatan greeted her with a profound courtesy which gave no indication of the surprise which her early-morning call occasioned. Gallantly he bowed her to a chair, and flung back the shutters of a window that the breeze might cool the room.

"Monsieur Samatan," she began abruptly, "ever since I was a little girl you have been very kind to me. You knew my father and my mother. Can I trust you with my confidence?"

"Mademoiselle, it would be my greatest happiness to serve you."

She looked intently at the dark level eyes of the merchant and their honest and friendly gaze confirmed her confidence.

"Captain Bush—he, too, is your friend?" she continued.

"Oui, mademoiselle, there is no man whom I regard with deeper affection."

"What has happened to him?" She leaned forward, her long fingers laced upon her knees, her deep eyes imploring.

Monsieur Samatan made an expressive gesture of despair with his hands. "It is a strange story, mademoiselle. He has left Le Cap; quickly, for his safety. But I shall tell you." Then with dramatic interpretation he recounted the story, as he had heard it, of Bush's encounter with Pierre Nicholas, and of his escape from the harbor on the evening previous. When he had finished, Virginie got up from the chair and laid her hands in his as he stood before her.

"Monsieur Samatan, he will return. For my sake, he has done these things. You alone know of this. My secret is in your keeping. As his friend, and as the friend of my parents, I appeal to you to aid us if the need arises!"

Monsieur Samatan was deeply affected. "I will promise that," he said, simply.

FROM a sky of intense blue the sun for five hours had burned down on the open boat with the heat of a furnace. The calm still held; only a gentle undulating swell broke the even surface of the sea. Even the water seemed to radiate the stupefying heat.

Just at dawn the men had taken in their oars and as the boat rocked gently they had slipped over the side the lifeless body of the boy who had died during the night. In the bow under a rude shelter of a sail the other wounded man had lain unconscious since the hour when from the deck of the sinking *Lucy* his comrades had lowered him into the boat. Bush had examined him and had tried with that rude skill which years of actual experience had given him to draw together the gaping wound in the broad chest. But the flying splinters of oak had cut wide and deep and an hour after the sun had lifted above the horizon Huggett from his place beside the dying man had raised his hand and in a hushed voice called to the captain that death had claimed its second victim.

Throughout these long hours Mogridge had sat crouched on a thwart, his injured arm carefully suspended in a rude sling. It was not surprising, considering the complaining disposition of the man, that he assiduously nursed his injury and that he resented with ill-concealed displeasure the unconcern which his wound occasioned. Mogridge was not popular with the men, but the effect of the constant criticism and complaining of a man of his disposition cannot be ignored, and the second mate was always certain of an audience whenever he felt inclined to comment unfavorably on the ship, the ship's stores, or her unconcerned captain. His harangue finished, with elaborate care he made his way to the sternsheets and with a servile deference crouched down on a thwart in front of the captain.

"Will ye be so kind, sir," he queried, "as to look at this arm again? The pain is very bad now. I'm giddy-like. Perhaps a tot of rum would ease it off a bit."

Bush made no answer but pulled the blood-blackened bandage from the man's arm and regarded the bruised and lacerated shoulder.

"Mr. Mogridge," he said very slowly and loud enough for all to hear, "two men have died quietly and without complaint. These are but scratches and bruises on your shoulder. I shall expect a manly silence from you who are fortunate to be alive. The rum"—he glanced through half-closed eyelids at the men—"I shall give out to the workers."

At noon a ration of salt meat and hard bread was passed from hand to hand from the chests secured in the stern and for each man a pint of water flavored with clarine, or crude Dominican rum.

The breeze still held from the south and all through the long, hot day, with the exception of two hours at noon when the sun burned down on the open boat with a withering heat, the men pulled steadily at their oars. Evening came and another night hastened fast on the abrupt sunset. Dew gleamed on the thwarts and a chill dampness permeated the air. The men had worked well and even Mogridge had relapsed into silence that although moody was by far preferable to his customary grumbling and complaining. For a few hours beginning with midnight the breeze shifted slightly to the northeast and the mast was stepped and a sail bent to catch the light air. But with the dawn it died entirely and the men again resumed their shifts at the oars.

Ever since the *Lucy* had been abandoned Bush had kept a sharp watch on the horizon. Although a sail might mean a desirable rescue he was aware that the chances were slight that it might be an American or a neutral vessel, and anything was preferable to capture by an Englishman, merchant ship or man-of-war. There was a large number of Yankee privateers at sea, however, and if one of these should chance upon the open boat nothing could be more fortunate, for such a rescue would insure their ultimate landing at an American port or, for that matter, at a neutral port, from whence he could more readily carry out his plan for a return to Le Cap.

IT WAS accordingly with no small emotion that shortly before noon on the second day the topsails of a small brig were sighted on the horizon, apparently holding a course that within a few hours would bring her within hail of the open boat. For a long time Bush had been planning a course of action, but he had not yet disclosed his plans to Huggett or the crew. Now, however, he determined to sound their inclinations, for the scheme which his active imagination had engendered required the implicit support of all.

"If yon brig is of our people," he explained, while the rowers trailed their oars and the others sat with bearded faces turned to him, "all is well. But I doubt greatly if a small trading brig—for such she appears to be—would be in these waters unless she is English or of another country. You will remember how much alone the *Lucy* has been, these years of the war. If we are taken up by an English ship, the consequences are well known to you. Escape is impossible. But there is an alternative which, if you're the breed of men that I believe you to be, can be attempted. Are you of a mind to follow me?"

A lank sailor with sun-bleached hair broke the moment of silence that ensued. "Aye, captain, we're with ye. But what may be the plan?" The others nodded in assent.

"There are now eleven of us in all," Bush continued. "We have cutlasses and tomahawks and there are six pistols in the store chest. I would have all but three hide beneath the canvas, while the others with the sail will hold a course along the wind. If we make her out to be American or a neutral, well and good, but if English, we will signal our distress; and if once we can get alongside of her without their suspicion that others are hid beneath the sails, there's a slim chance, but our only chance, we can take her by force."

There was silence, then a muttering of voices as the men in an undertone discussed their captain's plan. The carpenter finally turned to the captain. "If ye think it can be done, sir"—he spat carefully over the side and shifted a great wad of tobacco from cheek to cheek—"then we'll follow where ye lead. Better, says I, that we die on yon brig's deck than to rot in prison."

There was a murmur of approval from the men. The black face of the negro, Luke, broke into a broad smile and he wagged his head vigorously.

"And if we take the brig and she proves well laden, will there be a division of the prize money?" asked Mogridge.

"There will be the usual division," Bush answered. "If she carries a valuable cargo there will be a rich reward."

Already Huggett was setting the mast and bending the small sail. In the excitement of this desperate adventure the men began hurriedly to buckle their cutlasses about their waists and to select the small hand-axes or tomahawks that were perhaps the most popular weapons for boarding in those days when ships were laid side to side and the victory was most often won in bloody hand encounters. From a chest at his feet Bush produced the heavy smoothbore pistols and, with the help of Huggett and Mogridge, loaded and primed them. Carefully the extra sails were spread with apparent carelessness in the waist of the boat and as much as possible of the stores concealed beneath them, leaving sufficient space for the men who would crawl beneath as soon as the on-coming vessel could sight the longboat.

Through his spy-glass Bush watched the approaching brig. Slowly her courses appeared and then the hull came up out of the sea. In the light air she was carrying all her available canvas, but in spite of this she made slow headway, the wind barely filling the sails.

Huggett took the glass and studied the brig critically. "She's a merchantman," he finally said.

Bush nodded. "That's as I make her out, Mr. Huggett."

"And she's English," the other continued; "no mistaking her, sir. Lads, under the tarpaulin with ye! We'll take no chances."

From their places in the stern the two men surveyed the now apparently deserted boat. The small sail that had been set forward slapped listlessly as the long blue swells passed under the keel. The pile of canvas in the waist lay tumbled as though cast there for some purpose which the two men were unable to fulfil. Their appearance of distress was all that could be desired.

A half-hour passed and the brig was now not more than a mile away. Twice Huggett had stood in the stern and waved his shirt above his head, but there had been no apparent sign of recognition from the ship. Once again he steadied himself on spread legs and shook the torn, white garment in the air. Slowly the brig swung a point off her course and as the two watchers recognized this evidence that they were sighted, the red ensign was rapidly hoisted to the peak and again lowered to the deck.

Bush passed the information on to the crew. "She's English! Ten minutes, lads, and she'll be alongside. Not a sound there until I give the word; then follow me. A surprise is our only chance."

THE brig headed toward them, the blue water now and then whitening beneath her bluff bow. She was heavily laden and in the light breeze labored almost as though water-logged. Bush had concealed his glass beneath a thwart, for now he could clearly scan her deck with his naked eye. A sailor in the bow was the only sign of life that was visible. Apparently their appearance had created no particular interest. In an undertone Huggett called attention to the gun ports pierced in the low bulwark. Peaceable as was her appearance, the brig, like the *Lucy*, was evidently armed to take care of herself. Another sailor now joined the watcher in the bow. Bush waved his arm to them and one of the men lifted a coil of line above his head. So slowly was the brig moving through the water that it was evident that the sailor intended to cast a line to the longboat and bring it alongside without stopping his own progress. Huggett gave a quick look of satisfaction at the captain. To be picked up in this fashion would not necessitate the presence of officers or men on deck.

It may be questioned how a man of the integrity and courage of John Bush could purpose to take by force a peaceful merchantman thus proffering a service of mercy to two castaways in a small boat in an empty sea. But it must be constantly remembered that a war of singular bitterness was then in progress between England and the United States and that the impressment of Yankee sailors by British men-of-war had played no small part among the causes of that struggle. Accordingly, in the eyes of John Bush, this slow-plodding English merchantman was fair game to bag if he were able to do so by the ingenious strategy that he had determined to execute.

In another minute the high, blunt bow of the brig loomed above them. An order was bawled aft by the sailor to the steersman, the coil of rope came singing through the air and Huggett, catching it over his arm, made fast with a hitch around a forward thwart. With a quick glance Bush saw that a few seconds more would bring them within reach of the main port channel, a flat ledge of oak plank projecting outward from the brig's side for the spreading of the lower shrouds. By this means it would be easy for all to scramble quickly from the longboat to the brig's deck.

The gunwale of the longboat touched the brig's planking and as he felt the slight shock Bush whipped a pistol from beneath his coat and sprang for the channel, his hands grasping the chains that secured the dead eyes of the shrouds. As he leaped he gave a shout. "Now then!"

But the men needed no word of action. The sails were thrust back and from the bottom of the boat they followed their captain with a rush into the chains. So sudden and so unexpected was the attack that not one of the ship's crew for a few vital seconds resisted their onset. With a leap Bush cleared the bulwark and his feet struck the deck. Already Huggett was at his side. From the poop came the roar of a pistol and a bullet sang past his head. He saw the man who fired and the roar of his own pistol was the instant answer. With a rush one of the brig's crew flung himself against them, a long pike in his hands that buried its lance-like head in the chest of the last man to leave the longboat just as his body appeared above the gunwale. Cutlasses were clashing. Two, three, four more pistol shots roared viciously. A man dropped at Bush's feet and rolled screaming into the scupper, his head cloven with a cutlass. Two others were crumpled on the white planking. Of the brig's crew who had been on deck but one remained, and he was climbing now for life to the maintop.

"Clap on the hatches," shouted Huggett.

Already Bush had reached the companionway to the captain's cabin. He still carried his empty pistol and jammed its wide muzzle in the face of the red-coated officer who, sword in hand, was trying to mount the ladder and gain the deck.

"Back!" he ordered. "In the name of the United States I require your surrender."

Slowly the officer retreated and, the pistol still covering, Bush followed.

The sun was shining brightly through the cabin skylight. On the table were cards and some half-emptied wineglasses. A chair lay overturned on the deck; others were pushed back from the table. A little group of three men stood against the stern windows. They were all in their shirt-sleeves, but the trim small clothes of the two who stood together on the right gave Bush the instant clue that here were two of the King's officers, a suspicion confirmed by their red coats tossed on a transom, while in the general bearing of the third, a bearded man of forty, he recognized the captain of the brig. They were leaning over a bench beneath the windows and rose upright sharply as they heard him enter the cabin, half-loaded pistols in their hands. With a push of the muzzle of his own weapon in the fat, red-cloaked stomach of the man whom he had encountered on the ladder, Bush forced him abruptly into an empty chair. One of the other officers, a small elderly man with gray powdered hair, fingered at his belt for his sword hilt, but weapons had not until the moment been considered a necessity. All were unarmed.

"Sir!" thundered the little gray-haired man. "What is the meaning of this intrusion?"

"Damn his eyes," interjected the brig's captain, "this is piracy." He continued with brazen disregard to load his pistol.

"ENOUGH!" The words were drawled out but there was a cutting edge to them that could not be disregarded. "Lay down that pistol." There was a second of hesitation, then slowly the order was obeyed. "Gentlemen, I am sorry for this inconvenience, but I have no alternative, although it is my pleasure to offer alternatives to you. My men hold this ship. Your resistance is useless. If I may have your word on your honor as gentlemen, I shall consider you on parole, confined, however, for the present to this cabin. If you do not care to accept, you can only face the consequences."

"Are you devils?" The fat face in the chair at Bush's elbow was crimson with rage and mortification. "Where did you come from?" He breathed in hot gasps as he spoke. "In middle sea; honest men cut down; who in the name of the devil are you?"

Until this moment the third of the three officers had not spoken; but now he took a step forward, a pleasant smile brightening a grave, youthful face.

"I am Lieutenant Selby of the Ninth; these are my brother officers bound in this ship with me to the Jamaica station. This gentleman"—he waved a graceful hand half concealed by a lace cuff toward the glowering face of the captain—"is the master of this vessel on which we have the honor to be passengers. And now may I beg of you to explain the cause of disturbing sounds we have heard on deck and the somewhat unusual manner of your, may I say, intrusion?"

"Damn ye! What means this?" interpolated the apoplectic man in the chair.

"I am an American," Bush answered, "captain of the brig *Lucy*, which, having been abandoned by me and my crew two days ago, has made it necessary for me to secure another vessel. The state of war existing between our countries does not permit of the request of safe passage which I would otherwise make. Accordingly I have taken this vessel. Do you accept my terms?"

The men looked at one another; all except the captain of the brig, who stared with fixed eyes through the stern window at the blue sea and the square of flaming azure sky. Then the small man with the powdered hair slowly gathered the pistols from the bench and laid them on the table.

"There are doubtless other weapons here also; if you wish we shall discover them. Take these; we have no other means of defense at hand. We give you our words to remain here and to attempt no escape or resistance until—" He paused, uncertain.

"Or to communicate with any person until I personally give you my release," Bush continued.

"I accept." He glanced at his companions.

The younger man repeated the words.

"Damn ye!" sputtered he in the chair. "I accept, but ye shall regret this outrage!"

Bush looked at the captain, but the dark eyes still watched the sinuous wake. "I, too, accept," he said slowly.

"Then I think all is understood. Forgive me if I take these with me. It is possible that there may be some among the crew who will not prove so reasonable." He gathered the pistols from the table and turned to the door.

With an oath the great man with the red face leaped from his chair. "Pirates!" he roared. "Ye dirty hounds!" He dashed his sword on the deck. "I have agreed, but I will not soil my hands. If you want that"—he pointed to the sword—"take it where it lies. I'll not hand it to ye!"

Bush felt his face flush beneath the tan. With a glance at the red face that glared at him he turned and climbed the ladder. Pirate! The word staggered him. Was this war or piracy? To the dark-eyed girl in Le Cap he was the chivalrous Philadelphia captain of the armed brig of which he was also, in part, an owner. And now it was but a few minutes since he had scrambled barefoot over the side of an English ship and at pistol point required these men, of whom two at least were gentlemen, to surrender themselves and their vessel to him. But his thoughts went no further, for other matters of immediate consequence demanded his attention.

There was little on deck to suggest at first glance the extraordinary events that had so recently occurred. Under full sail the brig was crowding ahead, the sun shining brightly on her white canvas, and a wisp of blue wood smoke trailing from the galley stack. Shading his eyes with one hand Bush glanced at the steersman. It was one of his own men. Forward, Huggett and two others were securing the forecastle hatch, and beside the mainmast stood three of the brig's crew, their hands bound behind them, the redoubtable Mogridge covering their own helpless bodies with a huge bell-muzzle pistol. Near the port shrouds Luke was washing the deck with a bucket of water and scrubbing with one bare foot a dark stain on the white planking.

WITH a frown on his forehead Bush called to Huggett, and it was with a sense of relief that he saw the sturdy figure of the first mate turn and come toward him. In the long hours in the boat John Bush had sensed in the behavior of the men an abrupt change from the character they had always previously exhibited when on board the *Lucy*. There had been no instance of insubordination nor any reluctance to obey the few orders he had found it necessary to give, but discipline had unconsciously relaxed; the sharing of a common danger under conditions of forced intimacy had created a feeling of equality that could never exist where quarterdeck and forecastle are recognized; he felt that the men considered him more as their leader than as their captain.

And now these more recent events had increased the feeling of uncertainty that possessed him. Were the brig to be taken by a British man-of-war he harbored no illusion as to the fate that would await them. Pirates, the red-faced English officer termed them; as such he could expect scant consideration; and would they not be considered pirates, with plausible justification, by an enemy?

If these same thoughts were also in the minds of his men he wondered what would be their reaction. And particularly he wondered what would be their verdict when he proposed the hazardous venture that was already taking form in his restless mind. So it was that a feeling of relief possessed him when he looked down into the ruddy face of Mr. Huggett and read there the loyalty that he so vitally required.

During the next hour Bush inspected his new command and interviewed the prisoners. "Hercules" was her name; a brig about the same size as the *Lucy*, but designed along the broad, bluff lines of an Indiaman rather than according to the sharp, fine mold of the little Philadelphia blockade runner. She was English-built and English-manned and had sailed four weeks previous from Portsmouth for Port Royal with a mixed cargo of merchandise. The three army officers traveled as passengers and were returning to their regiment after home leave.

Of the crew, Bush gathered from the three prisoners on the deck that the *Hercules* was decidedly undermanned, four of their number having deserted in the Bermudas where the brig had called for wood and water, which left a muster of twelve men, excluding the captain and the second mate. The first mate, he learned, had died the day before the ship reached St. George from a gangrenous infection of a broken forearm. At the moment, therefore, in addition to the captain, the cook who was confined to the galley, and the three men on deck, there were five men imprisoned in the forecastle, subtracting from the total number the two who were killed at the boarding.

The armament of the *Hercules* was a matter of no small importance and Bush observed with satisfaction that five carronades comprised her main battery, in addition to two small brass cannon on the poop. Obviously no match for a privateer, she was still by no means defenseless, and for the plan which Bush now deliberated her armament was all that he required.

Having surveyed his prize and ordered the cook to prepare food for all hands and for the cabin and forecastle prisoners, Bush gathered his men at the break of the poop and outlined the plan of immediate action.

It was by no means an unpleasant picture. Under a sky now broken by great fleecy clouds the *Hercules*, another cloud of well-set canvas, drove steadily under an increasing breeze. Cool and clear the wind ruffled the hair of the little group of men who stood for the greater part bareheaded in the sunlight, and played with the loose and scanty garments that half clothed their muscular bodies. The longboat had been hoisted inboard, and from his chest Bush had recovered his shoes and the blue coat that had so well become him on that fateful evening at Le Cap. His hat was gone but his long, brown hair was again neatly tied with a bit of marline on his neck, and from his sun-blackened face his eyes again sparkled with the interest of this new adventure. With one arm thrown across the white handrail of the starboard ladder, he regarded them for a few seconds in silence.

"Lads"—the tone was friendly but there was the cold edge of determination in the slight drawl—"it is my intention to land these prisoners at Tortuga. From there I shall return to Le Cap on certain business and from there sail for an American port. This ship contains goods which will fetch a handsome sum at Philadelphia or any port that may seem advisable to make. The proceeds will be divided according to the scale of prize money customary with any ship carrying letters of marque. You will guard the prisoners zealously and observe a strict obedience to my orders. Mr. Huggett, you will take the ship until I relieve you."

He turned and descended the ladder to the cabin. After all, there had been no sign of insubordination; perhaps his imaginings had been groundless. They had apparently accepted his statement without question; he had noticed no evidence of dissatisfaction. The thought relieved him. With the *Hercules* and a loyal crew he felt capable of accomplishing even the mad project that he desired.

There was an acrid smell of stale bilge in the companionway and the cabin was close and hot from the sunshine on the deck above. The four prisoners were seated at the table, on which had been placed a great platter of steaming stew, and against the wall the cook still hovered, an obsequious black shadow that seemed to try to conceal itself behind a dingy curtain when its terrified eyes caught sight of Bush in the doorway. Of the four men at the table, Lieutenant Selby alone rose as Bush entered. They had quite evidently been drinking, for four emptied bottles of Spanish wine stood among the clutter of china, and as he saw his captor he raised a glass goblet with a slightly unsteady hand to his lips. Collapsed in an armchair, the gross body of the officer who had first encountered Bush was extended apparently unconscious. But as Selby's chair scraped on the deck the small eyes opened between puffy eyelids and purple cheeks long enough to turn a glance of rancor at the intruder.

LIKE a nervous sparrow the small man with the powdered hair played with the food on his plate and sipped at his wine. Of the four, the captain of the brig alone maintained his complete composure and sat, eyes straight before him, ignoring the presence of Captain Bush in his cabin.

A slop of wine fell from the swaying glass in Selby's hand and spattered on the table. "May I ask, my dear sir, the name of our captor, and if, as Major Buffington"—he swept the glass toward the recumbent figure in the armchair—"affirms, we are to be forced to walk the plank, or suffer other indignities?" An attractive smile softened the implication, and Bush smiled in response before he spoke.

"By tomorrow," he answered, "we shall sight Tortuga, and it is my intention to land you and your crew on that island where food and shelter are to be obtained. In the meanwhile no indignity will be offered you. However you may interpret the manner of your capture, there is no cause for alarm. It is my regret that I must confine you to this cabin, but I am glad"—the corners of his mouth wrinkled with evident amusement—"to see that you are well provided with the means for solace."

THAT night a fine wind carried the *Hercules* steadily along her course. She was sailing on long tacks to the southward and heeled perceptibly under the urge of her canvas. Once again on the deck of a vessel that he commanded, John Bush experienced the sense of confidence that rarely, if ever, deserted him. The poop was high and surrounded by a heavy oak rail carried by white painted rungs and from its elevation he could look forward and down upon the dim deck. The sky was misted with a bank of clouds and on the horizon the lightning flickered steadily. It had become almost uncomfortably warm, and he had thrown aside his blue coat on the skylight and stood, feet spread, behind the steersman. His eyes wandered now to the deck, now to the lofty structure of sails looking gray in the night and again to the yellow light of the binnacle. Suddenly he became conscious of several dark figures at the foot of the port ladder which led from the poop to the main deck. Low-pitched voices caught his ear, then three men quietly mounted the ladder. As they reached the top and came aft he recognized Mogridge, hat in hand, followed closely by two of the seamen.

"What will you have, Mr. Mogridge?" he asked sharply.

The man stood silent and his two companions shifted on bare feet behind him.

"You see, captain," he began, "begging your pardon, sir, there is some of the men wot feels a natural interest in the plan you told us this afternoon." He hesitated and then continued: "We'd like to know, seein' as how us are all together as it may be, in the prize money, wot this business is to take us back to the Cap, when a good run would land us home."

"As the captain of this ship, Mr. Mogridge, or of any other ship that circumstance may put me in command of, I fail to see why further explanation is necessary." From the corner of his eye Bush saw the half-turned head of the steersman and the quick thought came to him that perhaps Mogridge represented a unanimous agreement on the part of the men. "That will do," he added curtly.

But Mogridge showed no inclination to desert his position. "Fair enough, Captain Bush," he replied, "but with all respect to your authority, I wishes to say that there's some of us wot has no hankering to put our necks in a noose with no reason given."

"Who are those men? Step forward, lads!" The two men came reluctantly into the glow of the binnacle. "Truslow and Cate. Well, have you anything to say?" There was silence. Bush felt his face flush with the rising temper that he struggled to repress. "Get below there." His voice was hard and the men stepped back instinctively. "This talk is mutinous. Do you know that? No more of it, I say. Mr. Mogridge, you may take the wheel."

In a dispassionate voice the steersman gave the course and with the two sailors disappeared down the ladder. All the high sense of excitement that had until that moment stimulated him deserted Bush as if he had been dashed with water. With a feeling of infinite weariness he walked to the stern and leaned heavily on the broad rail. Mutiny, the word he had so sharply uttered, seemed to smolder beneath the shadowy deck of the plunging ship; already a spark had blown aft and he had pressed it out beneath his heel. How long would it be before it burst into open flame?

Back to Le Cap, the central point of danger, John Bush's course leads him in the next instalment of "The Citadel"—in July EVERYBODY'S, out June 14.

The Surprise Gobbler

A Live Turkey in a City Rooming-House, an Old Black Mammy, and a Famous Humorist to Tell the Story

By Harris Dickson

Illustration by Robert A. Graef

"NOW, Sis Burns, what is you goin' to give?"

The scrawny little chairman held his pencil ready while five other members of the Refreshment Committee cocked their ears for Sister Burns's generous donation. Heretofore she had been the most liberal provider in Mt. Rehoboth Church. Upon the occasion of the annual dinner Mammy Liz Burns had always toted more grub than any other cook in Vicksburg, because she worked for a lavish family that disdained to lock the pantry. Possibly for that toting reason Mammy Liz had lost her job, and now cooked—temporarily, she hoped—at Mrs. Hubbs's boarding-house, where the craftiest toter would fail to get away with a thimbleful of scraps. For Mrs. Hubbs undercalculated to a nicety what would be eaten, and her boarders left no scraps.

Confronted by the facts, Mammy Liz knew that the chairman's request for a donation would put her in the middle of a powerful tight fix. Yet she couldn't flicker and lose her influence in the church. So Mammy Liz leaned on the table with two fat elbows, like a pair of huge black hams, and inquired, "Brudder Gaston, what did dese udder sisters give?"

"Well," said the chairman, "Sis Petunia is goin' to fetch a basket o' turkey."

"Dat's nice," Mammy agreed, "an' easy, 'cause Sis Petunia cooks for de Jews."

"An' Sis Ada Medders"—the chairman squinted at his list of donators—"she's promised to fetch some cake, an' some lemons, an' a bowl o' chicken salad an—"

"Co'se," Mammy Liz nodded approval. "Dey's goin' to have a weddin' at her white folks' house. She oughter tote more'n dat."

"All right, Sis Burns," the chairman urged. "What kin I put you down for?"

The concentrated eyes of the church focused themselves upon Mammy Liz. She leaned back and the chair creaked beneath her enormous weight; then the floor groaned as she stood massively erect and announced:

"Mr. Chairman, jes' put me down for a *su'prise*—a big *su'prise*. Come along, Clawdeen." Mammy Liz caught her little daughter's arm, and waddled grandly out of the meeting to avoid questions that she could not answer.

Claudine followed, her kinky head pestered with wonderment, until Mammy rounded a corner, when the child could hold her tongue no longer.

"Oh, Ma!" her thin young voice piped up. "What kind of a su'prise is you aimin' to give 'em?"

"Gawd knows," answered Mammy Liz. "I was 'bleeged to promise sumpin wid Sis Petunia and dem women lookin' at me."

"But, Ma," the child protested, "you can't tote nothin' from Mrs. Hubbs' boa'din'-house?"

"Co'se not." Mammy waddled on, and presently Claudine's black face brightened with new hope as she suggested:

"Oh, Ma! Maybe Mr. Weems mought git took down drunk?"

"Hope he do," the mother grunted fervently. "I sho do pray de good Lord to put dat notion in his head."

"*Den* you'll git things—plenty of 'em," Claudine laughed aloud. "An', Ma, don't you figger he *is* fixin' to git drunk? It's nigh his time?"

"Sho is." Mammy Liz tightened her girdle-string. "I been watchin' him close, an' sees de signs. He's been keepin' sober for more'n two months, an' 'pears like he can't stand it no longer. Mr. Weems is jes' about due to let a foot slip, an' dat's why I couldn't promise de chairman nothin' 'cept a su'prise. 'Cause when Mr. Weems gits full, he's jes' apt to buy one thing as another—a bale of hay, a bunch o' roses, a cow an' calf, 'cordin' to what tickles him at de time."

As Mammy Liz called each possible purchase of Mr. Weems, Claudine kept bobbing her nappy head; she knew all about these exuberant celebrations when the dry-goods clerk turned himself loose for joy, and brought wonderful things to his room at Mrs. Hubbs's boarding-house—which Mammy Liz promptly fetched home to her children. For it was Mammy Liz who always took care of the souse and straightened him out.

AT SIX o'clock next morning Mammy Liz trundled her ponderous dimensions to a gate on which was nailed the sign "Rooms and Board"—a dingy and dilapidated sign that conveyed its ominous warning. Everything about the place was blistered by the sun, everything looked poor and starved, except the cook. Mrs. Hubbs kept a fat cook for advertising purposes.

This would be Mammy's active day. She must keep an eye on Mr. Weems. The other boarders weren't worth fooling with, especially the new arrival, Miss Anne Buckner, who came yesterday to share Mrs. Hubbs's smallest room and worst bed with Miss Ludie Siggers. Two girls that couldn't even afford to take their meals in the house were not likely to contribute much to Mammy's church donation.

No, Mammy's only hope was Mr. Weems, who appeared at breakfast wearing a red necktie. In summer-time he always wore white, and in winter black. The red was a sign of frisky notions. So Mammy chuckled as she passed him a plate of batter cakes. She chuckled again when she gazed from her kitchen window and searched his inmost soul as he passed on his way to town.

Mr. Gideon Weems was a methodical person. On the dot at 7:45 A.M. he invariably marched down the Hubbs front steps, proceeded thence to the Delta Dry Goods Co., where he opened the Ladies' Wear Department at eight. Jaunty Mr. Weems went pacing along the street, a bantam-sized bit of dapperness, sporting a brilliant scarf and twirling his cane. Mammy believed in signs. Whenever Mr. Weems put on a red necktie it was a sure sign that the Lord had inspired him to have a little fling.

"Huh!" she grunted. "He's nacherly got a head full o' notions—*plumb* full. An' I'll sho git sumpin for de preacher's dinner."

So Mammy began singing to herself as she snatched up a scuttle of ashes and waddled out to the side yard. She sang and kept singing as she dumped her ashes into a barrel when a fresh young voice called down:

"Good morning, Mammy. You seem to be very happy this morning."

The cook turned and glanced upward at the room which two strange bedfellows of poverty were occupying. In spite of certain prejudices, Mammy Liz always recognized quality folks, and now greeted Miss Buckner with the deference that was her due.

"Howdy, Miss Anne. How's you an' Miss Ludie gittin' along?"

"Pretty well, thank you."

If Mammy had known what an opera-box was like, she might have considered herself to be gazing up at one. In front sat Miss Ludie Siggers, a violent blonde who sprawled her fat white elbows along the window sill, while the dark Miss Buckner stood up behind her, and looked smilingly over her roommate's shoulder. Miss Siggers—she of the yellow hair and pudgy cheeks—was watching the street expectantly and had no time for noticing negro women; her stolid face showed no interest in anything until a country boy drove up in his wagon; then her countenance illumined with man-lit animation.

"Look, Anne!" Ludie nudged the other girl. "Here comes Mr. Sturgis. He's gettin' stuck on me."

"Oh! Is he?"

"Cert! Jes' watch his capers when I vamp him."

As the wagon was turning into their yard, Mammy Liz stepped aside to let the boy drive past with his wagonload of wood for Mrs. Hubbs. Making a great flourish, the youngster stopped his mules beneath Miss Ludie's window while the blonde girl primped her hair and beamed upon him.

"Howdy, Mr. Sturgis. How's every little thing?"

"Hello, kid!" the boy answered cheerily, and began hurling stove-wood into Mrs. Hubbs's shed; but he kept his eyes uplifted and remarked, "I ain't forgot that turkey I promised you."

"Aw! Quit yo' joshin'," Miss Ludie giggled. "When you goin' to bring it?"

"Toot sweet. That's French for P.D.Q. Your turkey's liable to show up any minute, and s'prise you."

"Shore would surprise me."

NOBODY imputes sinister motives to a fat woman. While Mammy Liz stood listening to their gabble, Miss Siggers never once suspected that she concealed a heart as black as her face, a heart that fermented with deep-laid schemes. Mammy threw one backward glance at the boy on his wagon, and the girl at the window, then waddled away, full of new hope.

"Ef dat turkey comes in dis house, whar Mrs. Hubbs don't 'low no turkeys, I'll sho git him for de chu'ch dinner."

For gastronomic reasons Miss Buckner also grasped at the suggestion of a turkey, and nodded her encouragement to the boy.

"I'm goin' to send it, all right." He vaulted to the ground and festooned himself against his wagon wheel, while Miss Buckner stepped back and pinched Desdemona in a locality invisible to her Romeo, and whispered:

"Ludie, get that turkey! It'll feed us for a week."

Thereupon Miss Ludie simpered with her fetchingest smile:

"I don't believe a word you say. You men are such story-tellers."

"Honest, kid!" The lad did look honest. "I mean it. Your gobbler'll be here before you know it, with a billydoo—that's French for love note."

"Seein's believin'!" Miss Siggers giggled some more, and Miss Buckner considered that a tactful moment to leave them. So she discreetly withdrew to make their morning coffee.

Anne Buckner came from New Orleans, Ludie Siggers from a sawmill camp. Ludie would use slang, gum, and toothpicks in public, yet might balk at cigarettes, or the skimpy gowns to which Anne had grown bridle-wise. Different as they were, a common bond now held them together—the necessity for cheap quarters while they earned a living—a condition to which the sawmill girl was born, and which sudden adversity had forced upon Anne Buckner.

The novelty of her plight amused Anne. It seemed too comical, this vamping intrigue for a turkey. She smiled at the rear view of abundant Ludie dangling from the window and waving her hand when the wagon rattled away.

When they had finished their coffee, with a frugal bun, Anne put on her little fur turban and suggested:

"Come along, Ludie. Let's go downtown and look at the new gowns."

"New gowns! I couldn't buy a second-hand postage stamp."

"It doesn't cost us a cent to look."

Ludie Siggers's conception of city life was gathered wholly from the screen. Had she foreseen what was about to happen, she would have considered that Fate guided their steps to the Delta Dry Goods Co. Fate, and there was no getting away from it. There Fate had also planted Mr. Gideon Weems, twenty years before, and led him plodding upward, step by step, to the dizzy pinnacle from which he now overlooked the Ladies' Wear. Neither of these two girls had ever seen Mr. Weems, or known of his existence. Mr. Weems never smoked, never played cards, nor danced, nor golfed, nor dissipated at the theater. Song did not rouse his sentiment, and women failed to allure him. To him the female form divine was merely a framework to be decked with silks or lingerie. A woman was a customer, a clothes-rack, and nothing more.

So if Miss Siggers had possessed a clearer knowledge of the Weems morality, she would never have misconstrued his motives when she watched him observing the fit of an evening gown upon the décolleté Miss Buckner. Mr. Weems stood off at a distance and observed; he moved nearer and observed; he patted Miss Buckner's shoulder, and observed; he lifted the hem of her skirt, just a trifle, and observed; he fluffed the laces across her bosom and observed, until Ludie Siggers got red all over.

"Anne Buckner," she exploded as they

left the shop, "I couldn't *stand* that man pawing over me. Didn't he make you nervous?"

"Certainly. So does the dentist."

"Whatever did you go there for? Never bought a frazzle."

"No. I just wanted to look at the styles."

"The nerve! Bluffed 'im like you was fixin' to buy the store, and have it charged. Anyway, I wouldn't trust that man no further'n I could throw a bull by the tail. One time I saw in the movies where a country maiden come to the city, and the boss of a big store he just—"

The girls turned east from Washington Street, and for three blocks Miss Siggers detailed the harrowing adventures of a country maiden pursued by a city man, until Miss Buckner halted in front of the Sanitarium, where she hoped to get employment as a nurse.

"Gee!" Ludie exclaimed. "Wish I was studyin' to be something grand, like you. I seen movies of the nurses, at the war. But my gizzard ain't got the sand. Them white tables where they carve up people! And the blood! That's what gets my goat."

"You become accustomed to all that," Miss Buckner answered with the nonchalance of her two days on the waiting list.

"Maybe so, but I'd better play with my little tinkle-tinkle bells. So long. See you later." And Miss Siggers cut diagonally across Monroe Street to the Telephone Building, for her third lesson in giving patrons the wrong number.

ABOUT seven o'clock that same night Anne and Ludie were buying their supper in a delicatessen shop, and coveting the plump dressed turkeys.

"No turkey for us," Ludie complained, "unless I vamp the Sturgis boy."

"No, we can't afford turkey," Anne replied as she bought fifteen cents' worth of sliced ham, four buns for a nickel, and five cents' worth of cheese.

With these incriminating packages concealed beneath her cloak so that Mrs. Hubbs wouldn't catch her smuggling food into the house, Miss Buckner stealthily opened the front door, and glanced about the hall in pretended terror.

"Oh, Ludie!" she whispered. "Aren't we having fun? This is *so* Bohemian."

"Bo—which?" asked the stolid Ludie.

"So gloriously independent. Living your own life. So— Oh, come on! Let's fry this ham."

Ludie had no imagination. Anne's first impulse was to sit right down and bawl. But she didn't. She only glanced at Ludie's unresponsive face and darted upstairs to where a single gas jet at the top had been choked down to a spark by the economical Mrs. Hubbs.

Their room was at the head of the stair, and it did not disconcert Miss Buckner to find her door ajar. Sometimes she locked it, and then again she didn't. But when she touched the knob a queer noise from within startled her—it sounded like a gurgle, a sputter, a dying strangle.

"Hear that, Ludie?"

"Shore did. What 'tis?"

"Sh! Listen."

In the half-dark hallway Anne stood motionless; then she made an unexpected scuffle with her foot which sent Ludie stampeding to the stair.

"Stop that, Anne! You scared me."

Anne's ruse, however, succeeded in provoking another noise from the room. Somebody was in there, and she determined to find out. So she kicked the door wide open and jumped back. Nothing happened and Ludie stood shuddering at each cautious step that Anne took toward the yawning blackness of their room.

"Come back, Anne," she begged. "Let's call somebody."

"No, I must see who it is."

A dim line of gas light cut slantwise across their narrow pen, revealing the washstand and its broken-spouted pitcher. Then, at the foot of their bed, Anne saw something else.

"Look, Ludie!" she pointed. "There it is—on the floor. Big black thing."

"Big—black—*thing!* Oh, my Gawd!" Ludie grappled Anne, and from the darkness they heard:

"Gobble. Gobble. Gobble."

Both girls dodged back to the stair rail, where Anne hung, limp and laughing. "Pshaw, Ludie! It's your turkey."

Bravely Anne marched into the room, lighted her asthmatic gas and saw a crate of riven clapboards, wedged between their bed and the fireplace. Through the slats an enormous bronze gobbler blinked redly at her, and at the gas. The dilated blue eyes of Miss Siggers also blinked, and she experienced a fluttery sensation when Miss Buckner said:

"Come in, Ludie. Here's a note for you."

Never before had Miss Siggers received a gift from any man. Her virgin bosom heaved and her heart beat as she read her lover's words:

> Keep this dark. The widow wouldn't let me bring it upstairs. Had to skirmish around the outposts until she left headquarters. Then I paid the cook four bits and got in anyhow. Nobody can't stop the A.E.F. Voysee votre turkey. Tray ban. Bonjoo. Ex Corp. Wm. H. Sturgis.

Miss Buckner doubled up on the bed in convulsions of mirth while Miss Siggers gazed pensively from her window, then turned to admire the turkey and remarked:

"Believe me, I'm some vamp. One time in the movies I saw a girl—Anne Buckner, what *are* you snortin' at?"

"Nothing."

"Can't a feller give things to the woman he loves?"

"Certainly. But that—that—that megatherium!"

"Meggy what?"

Ludie stood regarding her magnificent gobbler, then inquired helplessly, "Whatever can we do with him?"

"Eat him," announced the practical Miss Buckner.

"Sure! When he's cooked," Ludie said. "A turkey ain't no bunch of bananas. You can't jerk off a leg and eat it."

"Oh!" Miss Buckner began to see a long, long road between the crate and the plate. "I suppose we must do something to him."

BETWEEN the bars of his crate the gobbler eyed Miss Buckner with solemn suspicion as she turned to him for information which Miss Siggers did not possess.

"Old fellow," Anne confided, "you're the goat. We'll have to learn on you. Come along, Ludie; here's our rations for next week. And your friend wants us to clear away everything so that Mrs. Hubbs won't suspect."

"Yes, we've got to do that."

"Very well." Anne mobilized herself. "Picking must be the first thing. Let's start."

"All right," Ludie agreed. "Which end of him do you begin at?"

"That's for you to decide," Miss Buckner stepped back. "He's your turkey."

Ludie Siggers was not the woman to accept great and sudden responsibility. But where she had no plan, Ludie could produce an argument. "Anne Buckner, if *I* furnish the turkey, *you* ought to do the picking."

"That's fair—but hush! Somebody's at the door!" Anne sprang for the key and turned it, then heard a tap-tap, and the whisper: "Honey? Is you in dere?"

"That you, Mammy? Yes. What is it?"

"Open de do'. No more'n a crack. Now you kin hear. Don't let Mrs. Hubbs know 'bout dat turkey, 'cause I'd lose my job. An' las' winter she put two young gals outer dis house 'cause dey fotch grub to deir room. Mrs. Hubbs don't 'low no grub in her rooms.

"Yes, yes; she told us her rule."

"So I want to keep you out o' trouble."

"Thanks, ever so much."

Then Mammy Liz went downstairs again, like a hippopotamus on tiptoe, while Anne turned back to Ludie, saying:

"We've got to be careful and not make a bit of noise. Do you think this turkey will lie still while I'm picking him—or flop all over the place and scatter feathers?"

Ludie wasn't sure, so Anne suggested something else:

"Our cook used to talk about scalding a chicken before she picked him. Makes the feathers come off easy, or something. Quick, Ludie. Heat some water in the foot-tub."

With a vigorous shake of the head Miss Siggers vetoed that proposition. "Not by a jugful! We're doing this on the Q.T. and that gobbler shore would make a fuss in hot water."

"There must be *some* method," Miss Buckner insisted. "But mother always buys hers ready-dressed."

"They ain't born ready-dressed. That's a cinch."

"Hush, Ludie. Let me think. I've got it. I remember seeing the shepherds in Scotland, shearing their sheep. That's the idea. We'll tie this turkey's feet together. You sit on his head and I'll clip him."

Fired by new enthusiasm, Miss Buckner snatched open her suitcase and produced a pair of manicure scissors. "Will these do?"

Again Miss Siggers vetoed. "No, Anne. But I've got a razor for my corns."

"That'll take lather. Such a lot. Listen, Ludie. Do they pick turkeys first, or kill them first?"

"Kill 'em? Oh, my Gawd!"

"We can't eat a live turkey."

The empty Miss Buckner sat down to ponder upon their dinner. Gradually the process cleared, until every step seemed plain.

"Ludie," she decided. "Of course you kill them. That's the very first thing that happens."

"Kill him? How?"

"Chop off his head."

"And the blood?"

No, Anne thought again, that would never do. For a long, long while she crouched on a suitcase, with fingers interlocked about her knees; then she sprang up triumphantly.

"What idiots we are! *I* know what to do. We'll *chloroform* him."

Before Ludie could ask questions Anne had clapped on her turban, jabbed a hatpin through it and bolted downstairs. This most eligible of rooming-houses was only three blocks away from the Sanitarium. Like a gray-blue bat flitting through the night, Anne covered the distance and raced back again.

"What you got?" Ludie asked with inquisitive glances at the package that Anne began to unwrap.

"Chloroform. Borrowed it from the Sanitarium while nobody was looking."

"Huh! It's more like a can of condensed milk."

MISS BUCKNER ignored all interruptions, and issued orders in the peremptory tone of a head nurse. "Miss Siggers, kindly clear that table in the kitchenette." For Anne felt a hunch that she required oodles of room before she got that gobbler chloroformed and picked.

Clearing the table was accomplished by slinging two cups and two plates on a top shelf, after which Ludie followed Anne into their bedroom with a dose-size teaspoon and inquired:

"How many spoons o' this stuff do you give?"

"Put that down. Chloroform is *not* castor oil. Get the washrag."

"Oh! You're goin' to *bathe* him?" Ludie smiled intelligently.

"No. Give me the rag. Thanks."

Armed with anesthetic and cloth, Anne paused to contemplate her patient. The problem now was to get hold of the gobbler's head, and she appealed to Ludie. That young person acted promptly. A yank from her hook-handled parasol snatched the turkey's neck between the slats, when her ten strong fingers grappled him, and he set up a most astounded flapping.

"Hold him, Ludie!" Anne wadded the washrag and poured something on it from the can.

Both girls were now on their knees beside the crate, clinging to the huge bird that beat his wings against the bars, and gave one throttled squawk as Miss Buckner wound her soppy rag around his beak. The pungent, sickish odor of ether permeated their little room.

"Gee!" Ludie giggled. "I feel myself jest a-floatin' and a-floatin'."

"Don't turn loose. Hold him. He's nearly gone."

"Nearly gone—so'm I."

In another moment Ludie's fingers let go, and the turkey's dead weight dropped. Dizzily Anne sank backward beside her friend, who was on all fours, waggling her head.

"I feel so fun-ny!" the fat girl grinned. "I feel so fun-ny."

"Shut up. You'll be all right in a minute."

It was much longer than a minute before Ludie took further notice of Miss Buckner, wielding a poker and prying off slats from the crate.

"Come, Ludie! Help me," she beckoned. "We *must* pick this turkey and get rid of the coop."

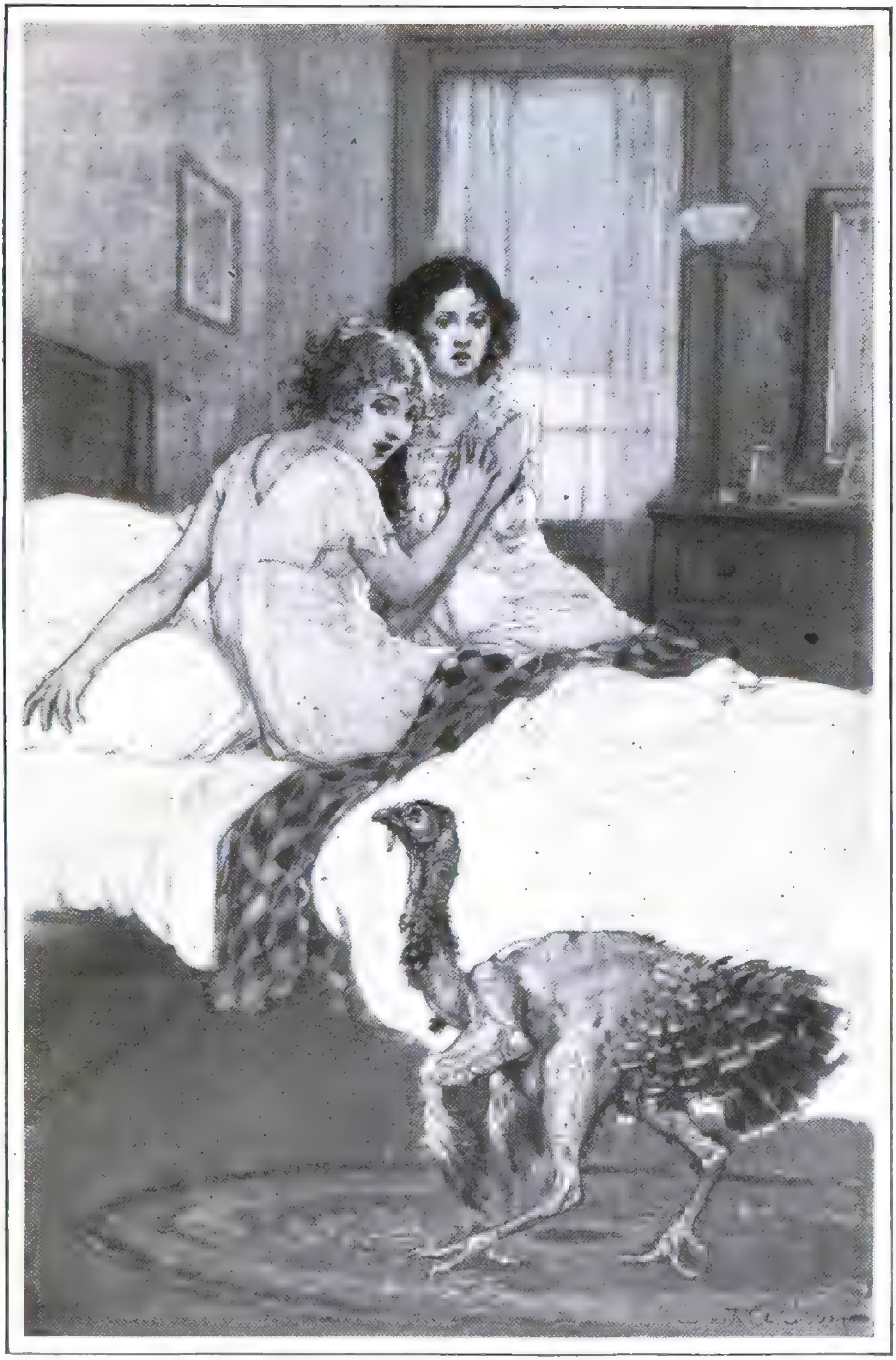
"Throw him away," Ludie answered. "I never want another bite to eat as long as I live. Is he dead?"

"Certainly he's dead. Whew! And heavy."

The gobbler made a most unwieldy armful when Anne stumbled into their kitchenette and dumped him on their table, then called back:

"Oh, Ludie! Bring my hatbag. You'll have to carry out these feathers. There's millions and millions of them."

"All right." Ludie braced herself. She was already sick from the ether, and beginning to get sick of the turkey. Yet for the sake of her noble lover she stuffed the feathers into the hatbag while Anne picked and picked and picked.



The gobbler staggered about the room, bumping into furniture, its head still reeling from the fumes of ether.

Every bagful that Ludie toted out brought its separate and exciting adventure, reconnoitering both halls, sneaking across the back yard, and hiding the telltale evidence in Mrs. Hubbs's ash barrel. At each return Ludie noted just how much the gobbler's deforested area had grown and widened. He began to show great patches of white where Anne had plucked him bare —in spots. The last time Ludie climbed panting up the stair she found her turkey stripped quite clean, with only a fanlike spread of feathers at the tail, and a coquettish ruff around the neck to emphasize his cosmic nudity.

"Gee!" Ludie exclaimed. "Ain't he a whopper? And so—so naked!"

"Miss Siggers," Anne reproved her, "have you no delicacy? This is a *he* turkey."

"Sure. And bigger'n a skinned mule!"

Fat and pink, the gobbler's sprawling nakedness covered their tiny table, with one leg dangling indecently over its edge.

"Now, Ludie, don't sit down and stare at him. Carry out this one last bag. Then we're done."

THE blonde girl had traveled her route so often, and Mrs. Hubbs's rear premises become so familiar in the dark, that she grew careless at the end. She crossed the back yard with head down, smiling to herself, and thrilled at the thought of having a sweetheart. Otherwise Ludie must have seen a shadow that now stood beside the ash barrel, where no shadow had been before. But Ludie wasn't seeing things with her eyes. She went straight on and had emptied her feathers when a huge black hand reached out from the darkness and touched her wrist.

"Sh!" the shadow warned.

But Ludie didn't hush. She yelled, just once, broke loose and ran. The side door slammed behind her, and Ludie tumbled her fatness upstairs without caring who heard the racket, to collapse in a chair beside the astonished Anne.

"Oh, Anne! Anne!" she gasped. "He—tried—to *catch* me."

"Who?"

"A man! *Black* man! In the back yard! But I got away!"

"Nonsense, Ludie."

"He did! There!" The hysterical Miss Siggers sprang upright, her finger pointing to a black face that now peered in at the door. "Look! There he is!"

"Goosey! That's Mammy Liz." Anne burst out laughing when the solemn-faced cook squeezed into their narrow quarters. "Mammy, what on earth are you doing here, at this time of night?"

That was none of Miss Buckner's business; and Mammy didn't tell that she'd been keeping vigilant eyes on Mr. Weems until he escaped from her in a taxi, under convoy of hilarious friends. So she rushed back to make sure that he hadn't reached home. That's why she was gazing up at the window of Mr. Weems when Ludie got her fright.

"Dar now, Miss Ludie." Mammy Liz bent over the girl. "Dar now! I didn't aim to skeer you. I jest glimpsed yo' light, an' says to myself, 'I wonder is dem chillum gone an' picked dat turkey in deir room?'" And there lay the naked gobbler, speaking for himself.

"Ugh!" the old woman groaned. "Sumpin powerful onpleasant is 'bout to happen in dis boa'din'-house."

"Why?" Anne questioned. "Does Mrs. Hubbs know anything?"

"Not yit. Not yit. But fust thing in de mornin' she's goin' to say, 'How come dese fedders in my ash barrel?' Den she'll go pokin' round, wid dat long nose o' hern, till she skivvers dis gobbler. Ugh! I wouldn't be *nigh* dis place when she blows up."

"Well, what's to be done about it?" Miss Buckner's steady voice proved that she wasn't bluffed, like the other girl; so Mammy Liz felt around more cautiously.

"Honey, I tell you what I'd do. Ef 'twuz *me*, I'd git rid o' dat gobbler, dis very night, an'—"

"No such thing. He's been too much trouble. Here, Mammy, you take this quarter, and get rid of the feathers. We'll keep the gobbler ourselves."

"Jes' as you say, honey. Jes' as you say. But I'd hate to see a lady git to fightin' wid Mrs. Hubbs. 'Sides dat, somebody mought come in here an' steal yo' turkey. Niggers is all de time climbin' in dat window."

"*Burglars?*" Ludie's blue eyes bulged.

"Sholy. It comes so handy for burglars to crawl over dat woodshed."

"Go 'long, Mammy; go 'long." Anne gave her a good-natured shove, and the old woman went out, muttering to herself.

"Now, Anne," asked Ludie, dropping into a chair, "what are we going to do next?"

"Next? I'm going to bed. It's nearly one o'clock. But that's what *I* call a well-dressed turkey."

"Dressed? He's scan'alous undressed. But, Anne, ain't you got somethin' more to do to him?"

"I rather imagine there must be," Anne answered dubiously. "But we'll decide on that tomorrow."

EVEN the flutteration over her successful début as a vamp failed to keep Miss Siggers awake; and insomnia never jarred upon the soundness of Anne's slumber. They were both dog-tired.

Whether she had barely dozed, or been sleeping for hours, Ludie did not know when her clump of knotted curl-papers and her tousled head shot up into the air. She sat erect, bolt upright in bed, and listened—listened again. Somebody *was* in their kitchenette. She heard a pan rattle. There! It rattled again.

"Anne! Anne!" Ludie shook her unconscious bedfellow. "Wake up! Burglar's after our turkey."

"What?" The black head popped up beside the yellow. Anne Buckner was no alarmist. She also heard a thumping on the kitchenette floor, like the tread of a barefoot man. Their hall door was locked; but their window, and that of the kitchenette, had been left open. A thief might easily climb in from Mrs. Hubbs's woodshed, as Mammy Liz had predicted.

"Ludie!" Anne whispered. "Get up quietly. We'll slip into the hall, lock the door behind us and yell."

"All right. I'm so scared I can't wiggle." Ludie had scarcely ventured a tentative foot upon the floor when she tumbled back again and pointed.

"Look, Anne! Look! That *door!*"

The kitchenette door was being pushed open, as if by a slow and wary hand from the other side. Both girls stared in terror, dreading the sight of a burglar's evil face as their door swung wider. Nobody came through. Yet they heard the same noise. Now it was within their own room. The same padded footsteps were approaching their bed. Day had nearly come. There was plenty of light, but the terrified girls could see nothing. Then they heard a "Gobble! Gobble! Gobble!" immediately beside their bed. Ludie dropped back, helpless, while Anne bounded out of bed on the far side and exclaimed:

"Ludie, it's your turkey, come to life!"

"Come to *life?* Goddlemighty!"

Dumb with fear Miss Ludie sat up and eyed the resurrection of her gobbler, which staggered about the room, bumping into furniture, its head still reeling from the fumes of ether, and full of amazement at its naked condition.

"Get up, Ludie," Anne called. "And help me to catch him."

"Not me! I wouldn't put my hand on that thing for a million dollars."

"Then *I* will."

But all of Anne Buckner's strategy failed to trap the turkey. It dodged and ducked and sidestepped, and finally compromised its dignity by creeping under their bed.

"Ludie, you catch him on this side," Anne said as she went under the bed after it.

Again Miss Ludie tried the experiment of trusting one bare leg upon the floor, when the turkey's cold wing scraped against it. She leaped. She leaped straight ahead. At her second jump, Ludie snatched open the door, through which the gobbler instantly disappeared. Before Anne could crawl out from under the bed, the turkey was gone and Ludie had relocked their door and stood defending it.

"Ludie Siggers"—Anne confronted her in a fluffy nightgown—"march yourself out there and bring that turkey back."

"Not on your life! Go yourself. You chloroformed him."

Angrily Miss Buckner threw Ludie from the door, opened it and peered out. In the dim light she saw their turkey wabbling toward the front, away from the staircase, swaying and wavering like a drunken man, and casting grotesque shadows along the floor. Anne Buckner carried a lot of determination in that frilly gown of hers. She hesitated a moment; but the house was very still, everybody seemed asleep, and she ran out barefoot to recapture it.

"Come on, Ludie."

BOTH girls were in the far front of the upper hall, so intent upon corralling their gobbler in a corner that neither of them heard a taxicab which stopped outwide, nor heard the muffled voices of men who were unloading Mr. Weems. At the edge of the sidewalk Mr. Weems was giving his friends much trouble to extract him from the taxi and balance him upon his feet.

"Come in, fellers. Come in." He waved a hospitable hand toward his mansion.

"Too late, ol' sox," a semi-sober man replied.

"'Tain't late. Come in," Mr. Weems insisted. "I'm givin' a dinner. Bought all these things. Shee!"

It was not difficult to see the property which Mr. Weems had accumulated. Mammy Liz saw it very plainly from where her bulky blackness crouched behind the ash barrel. Packages fell out of the taxicab; cans rolled out from the taxicab, and bundles strewed the sidewalk. A bowl of goldfish and a sheaf of American Beauties Mr. Weems bore in his own loving arms.

"Plenty for ev'ybody," he announced. "Goin' to cook ten pounds o' beefsteak in my 'partments. Dec'rate 'Merican Beauties. Aw, come in, fellers. Come in!"

Two friends with fairly manageable legs lifted Mr. Weems up the front steps and deposited him on the hallway floor, in a recumbent attitude, so that he couldn't fall, then humorously piled all the packages on top of him. Leaving this monument as a testimonial of affection, his friends in the taxi drove away.

"Aw, come in, fellers! I'm jes' 'ginnin' to shelebrate!"

Indignant at their desertion, Mr. Weems gathered a few of his belongings, but never thought of closing the door. He had plenty to think about when he began to negotiate the perilous stairway, spilling packages as he climbed. From near the top his golf-bag fell clattering to the bottom, and Mr. Weems turned to wave it a dignified adieu.

"Suit yo'self, ol' sox. Suit yo'self."

This rattle of golf clubs was the first warning to reach Miss Ludie's ears, while she and Anne were cornering their turkey in the upper hall. The fat girl turned and saw a head appear, with the rakish smile of Mr. Weems, and she clutched Anne's arm.

"Look, Anne! That nasty man's coming after us. He's bringing flowers—and candy. I *told* you not to trust him."

Now that he had succeeded in gaining a foothold at the head of the stair, Mr. Weems took spraddle-legged possession of the hall, occupying a position between the night-robed girls and their door. There he stood chuckling, with an armful of roses, a bowl of goldfish, a box of candy and other things. Anne Buckner drew herself up, rigid and chillier than a vestal, as Mr. Weems moved toward her. Their door stood open. He glanced inside and grinned. The ways of this amusing world seemed a comical profundity to Mr. Weems. A moment he paused, looking in at their room, then set resolute face toward the women.

"He's comin'." Ludie shivered and foresaw the big scene, which always happened to country girls in the movies. There was no escape; all doors were locked except their own, and they couldn't reach that. The white-robed figures huddled together but saw no way to avoid this smirking roué with his shameful flowers and his candy. So Miss Anne Haven Buckner grasped the hand of her friend and side by side their phalanx of virtue went forward.

Mr. Weems glanced up. Two white apparitions never daunted him. He wasn't skittish of nightgowns. Nightgowns were part of his trade. His eyes sparkled with love-lit recognition at the first and frilliest one. He stopped. His lips moved, and from the methodical index of his mind he murmured:

"Kips & Bamberger. Style R. Lot 844. Special."

Ludie's plainer gown he relegated in silence to the seventy-nine-cent counter. But Miss Buckner's *robe de nuit* was handmade, with a novel design in appliqué at the bottom. So his mercantile eye wandered downward to observe, while Anne's face went fiery red.

"What *are* you doing here?" she demanded.

"Come in, ladies—my 'partments. I'm givin' big dinner. Make self at home."

"You *insolent!*" Anne burst out.

WITH maudlin gallantry Mr. Weems stepped back, bowing very low, bowing extremely low, shedding olives, celery, beefsteak, along the floor, and courteously waving the hand that held his American Beauties.

"Go far's you like, ladies. Go far's you like. Tomorrer's my birthday."

More and more profoundly Mr. Weems bowed until he sat down, abruptly but solemnly sat down, as if that were the precise coup that he had planned, sat down with his back against the wall beside Anne's open door, playfully prodding the pretty little goldfish and singing to himself:

"I'm goin' to be Queen o' th' May, mother;
I'm goin' to be Queen o' th' May."

As his song went hiccuping down the stair, the front door opened a little wider and Mammy Liz peeped in. "Huh!" She listened and grinned. "Mr. Weems sho is feelin' fine." Her glance followed his trail along the stair. Those golf clubs she could sell; Mount Rehoboth congregation would eat the stuff in cans. Mr. Weems must have plenty more in his room, and nothing would be left behind. But she heard Miss Anne's voice, and waited.

Upstairs Mr. Weems sat against the door, blocking the girls' way, and improvising his sonnet to the goldfish: "I'm goin' to be Queen o' th' May, fishy; goin' to be Queen o' th' May."

"Ludie!" Anne whispered. "I believe the man's been *drinking*."

"Sure! They always tanks up before they pulls the rough stuff."

"Then we must get into our room."

"But we can't step right over his legs."

"We *must* step over him."

The girls had forgotten their turkey, but the turkey remembered. Nobody seemed to be hindering, and here was his chance. He crouched close to the wall, squeezed past the girls, then stopped and blinked at a new obstacle in the shape of Mr. Weems, whose erratic legs stretched half across the hallway. The gobbler looked at those legs and paused suspiciously. Then his nakedness wabbled on again, his long neck thrust forward to reconnoiter Mr. Weems, and his spread tail steering him like a rudder.

Mr. Weems continued serenading his goldfish, "I'm goin' to be Queen o' th' —"

Suddenly he shut up. He saw something. Or thought he saw something. His mouth flew open. He stared at that staggering Thing, at that red-eyed naked phantom. Maybe it was there, and maybe it wasn't. Anyway, with a convulsive movement Mr. Weems jerked in both his legs.

"Gobble! Gobble! Gobble!" said the startled turkey.

Mr. Weems didn't say a word. He merely rolled over and galloped on all fours through the first hole that would hide him—into Miss Buckner's room. His legs vanished within while the abandoned bowl was still settling on its side, and the goldfish were spilling out.

"Ludie!" Anne gripped her arm. "The man *is* drunk."

"Sure! Loaded for geese. Lemme git at him."

Every scale of romance and glamour fell from the eyes of Miss Siggers, ex-cook at the sawmill, famous for the promptitude with which she bounced the souses on Saturday nights. She glanced around for a billet of wood, for an ax handle, a canthook, or a singletree. But the empty hallway furnished no such weapon, so Ludie advanced, barelegged and barehanded, to the eviction of Mr. Weems. Her nightgown was all too short, and Ludie had nearly reached the door when she exclaimed, "Oh!" and stopped. For Mr. Weems had poked out his bristly head from the very bottom of her doorway, and was squinting like a rat along the floor.

"You sneaky little devil!" She denounced him.

BAD as he was, Ludie Siggers had misjudged Mr. Weems; he wasn't looking at a pair of fat piano legs, but only making sure that the gobbler was still there. Then Mr. Weems snatched back his head again, just in time to keep the enraged Miss Siggers from stepping on it. He wasn't quick enough to slam the door in her face; Ludie wedged in her shoulder, and shoved like a mule until the door burst open and she plunged within.

"Get out o' here, you low-down skunk!"

"Can't, lady," he whimpered. "Something *awful's* in the hall."

"Then I'll throw you out!"

Ludie was perfectly able to evict him, but Mr. Weems so interlaced his arms among the iron rods of her bed, and grappled a rocking-chair with both legs, that she couldn't throw out the man unless she threw out the furniture.

"Ain't goin'?" Ludie panted, and let go his collar to get a grip on Mr. Weems' hair, then bumped Lothario's head against the bed frame until he yelled: "Lemme go!"

"Let him go, Ludie," Anne pleaded. "Let him go. You'll alarm the neighborhood. Who's that? Oh! Mammy Liz!"

ANNE whirled, and Ludie suspended her pommeling when she saw Mammy Liz standing in their doorway—big fat Mammy, with an old-time basket on her arm, and charitable apologies for every form of human frailty.

"Look, Mammy! Look!" Anne's quivering finger pointed. "This man broke into our room. *Please* help us get him out."

"Lord, Lord, honey child,'' Mammy smiled. "Mister Weems never meant no harm. He jes' made a mistake."

"Mistake?"

"Yas'm. He lives in dat 'j'inin' room."

"Next to us?"

"Yas'm." Mammy kept smiling indulgently. "You knows how 'tis when a gemmun gits full—two or three doors, mo' or less, don't signify nothin' to him. Come 'long, Mr. Weems."

Her coaxing fingers untangled him from the bars of Ludie's bed, and led him into the hall, where Mr. Weems balked at sight of the phantom gobbler.

"Come 'long, honey; come 'long. Mammy won't 'low nothin' to hurt her lamb."

Shielding him from the thing of horror, she hurried Mr. Weems into his own room, where a creak from the bedsprings told how he had tumbled across his bed and passed away.

The star boarder had retired. The two girls in nightgowns clung together at their doorway while the nude indecent gobbler leaned against the wall and contemplated them.

"Ludie, what *shall* we do with that dreadful turkey?"

"Goddlemighty knows."

Then the question seemed to answer itself, as many questions do, for Mammy's dog came up the staircase, sniffing to find his mistress. The girls didn't see him; they only heard his yelp of terror as he took one look at the naked gobbler, then yelped three times for every step he struck in falling down the stair.

"Who kilt my dog?" Mammy came running out from Mr. Weems's room, and Ludie threw both arms around her neck.

"Oh, Mammy! For Gawd's sake take him away. Take him away."

"Take who away?"

"That turkey—there he is."

"Lordee, chil'!" Mammy shook her head. "I ain't got no use for nary turkey."

"Take him anyhow. I'll *pay* you to throw him in the river."

"Dar now, chil', dar now. I don't want no pay, but jes' to pacify you—" Mammy reached down, grabbed the gobbler, wrapped him in her apron, laid him in her basket on top of the goldfish bowl, the beefsteak, the American Beauties, and a five-pound box of candy. "All right, Miss Ludie, I'll take him jes' to pacify you. Jes' to pacify you."

Her black face never broke into a grin until she got outside the house, with a turkey all trussed and ready to fulfil the noble destiny of a gobbler at the preacher's annual dinner.

A New Novel by a Well-Known Writer

The Finger of Fire

By George Kibbe Turner

SOCIAL intrigue, daring escapades, bewildering chicanery—these make "The Finger of Fire" a story that you will follow with interest through the summer months. So well has Mr. Turner done his work that his characters seem to step from the pages and live before the reader. The story is laid on the seacoast, and is as invigorating as the east winds. Beginning in—

July *EVERYBODY'S* Out June 14

Making Arrangements

In This Story of a Temperamental Woman and the Seemingly Unemotional Man She Left Behind, Everybody's Welcomes to Its Pages Another New Author

By Elizabeth Bowen

SIX days after Margery's departure, a letter from her came for Hewson Blair. That surprised him; he had not expected her to write: surely the next move should be his? Assuming this, he had deliberated comfortably—there was time, it had appeared, for sustained deliberation—and now Margery had pounced back upon him suddenly. It was like being spoken to when he was settling down to a stiff book in the evening; Margery had often done this.

He remembered as he scrutinized the postmark that the last time she had written to him was from Switzerland, last Christmas. She always said she found him difficult to write to—why write now, then, when she might be better occupied? Hewson never sneered; his face lacked the finer mobility and his voice the finer inflections; he turned over the unopened letter, felt that it was compact and fat, and pinched the corners thoughtfully.

He found the name of a riverside hotel printed on the flap of the envelope, and reread this several times with amazement, unable to conceive how a young woman who had gone away with somebody else to a riverside hotel—with white railings, Hewson imagined, and geraniums swinging in baskets, and a perpetual, ever rushing past of the water—could spare some hours of her time there writing to her husband. Unless, of course, she simply wanted to tell him about Leslie.

Of course she must have a considerable amount to say about Leslie after having lived with him under necessarily restricted conditions for the last six days. She had always told Hewson about her many friends, at great length, and as he was not interested in these people the information went in at one ear and out at the other. He imagined that Leslie was the one with the cello, though he might have been the one with the golf handicap—he could not say.

If she wanted to come back—he was slitting open the envelope carefully, and this made him pause a moment—if she wanted to come back he must write briefly and say he was sorry, he could not have her, he had made other arrangements. His sister was coming to keep house for him tomorrow, and the servants were even now getting ready the spare room.

Hewson had just come in, having got away a little earlier than usual from the office where people were beginning to know, and to speak to him awkwardly with scared faces. He had not, of course, been near the club. In stories, people who were treated as Margery had treated him threw up everything and went abroad, but Hewson did not care for traveling and it would be difficult to leave his business just at present. He had never seen very much of Margery, his wheels went round without her; all this, if one could regard it rationally, came down to a few readjustments in one's ménage and a slight social awkwardness which one would soon outgrow.

Parkins had just made up the library fire; she was drawing the curtains noiselessly across the windows. Hewson wondered what *she* had thought of Margery's letter as she enisled it, lonely, gleaming and defiant.

on the silver salver on to which Margery had so often flung her gloves. Margery would fling her gloves on to the salver and her furs across the oak chest and swing humming into the library to read her letters by the fire. She would settle down over them like a cat over a saucer of milk, bend and smile and murmur over each, rustling the paper; and one by one drop each, crumpled, into the grate. Margery was a person who dealt summarily with her husks; bit through direct to the milky kernel of things and crunched delectably.

Tonight the grate was very tidy. Hewson watched Parkins's back and felt the room unbearably crowded.

"That's all right," he said. "That will do. Thank you, Parkins."

He stood with his back to the fire, watching Parkins narrowly until she had left the room. Then he let Margery out of the envelope.

"IT DOES seem funny to be writing to you again," Margery wrote. "I haven't for such ages—that note I left on the mantelpiece doesn't count, of course. Wasn't it dramatic, leaving a note like that! I couldn't help laughing; it just shows how true novels really are.

"Dear Hewson, there are several things, quite a lot, that I want sent after me at once. As I expect you saw, I didn't take more than my dressing-case. I know you will make all arrangements—you are so awfully good at that sort of thing. I suppose there *are* rather a lot of arrangements, I mean, like getting the divorce and sending my clothes on and writing to tell people; and I expect you would rather give away the dogs.

"We don't quite know how long a divorce takes or how one gets it, but as I told Leslie, who often gets rather depressed about all this fuss, you will be able to arrange it all beautifully. We are going abroad till it is all over; Leslie is so fearfully sensitive. We want to go quite soon, so I should be so much obliged if you could send those clothes off to me *at once*. I enclose a list.

"Leslie says he thinks I am perfectly wonderful, the way I think of everything, and I suppose it really is rather wonderful, isn't it, considering you always made all the arrangements. It just shows what one can do if one is put to it. Leslie would like to send a message; he feels he can't very well send his love, but he asks me to say how sorry he is for any inconvenience this will cause you, but that he is sure you cannot fail to feel, as we do, that it is all for the best. Leslie is fearfully considerate.

"Dear Hewson, I think you are too sweet and you know I have always liked you. I feel quite homesick sometimes in this horrid hotel, but it's no good being sentimental, is it? We never suited each other a bit, and I never quite know what you wanted me for. I expect you will be fearfully happy now and settle down again and marry some fearfully nice girl and get the rock-garden really nice without my horrid dogs to come and scratch it up. Now, about the clothes . . ." Directions followed.

AS HEWSON read this letter he remembered Leslie (though he still could not say whether he was the one with the cello or the golf handicap), a young man with a very fair short mustache and flickering lashes, who liked his port. It seemed quite right that such a fair young man should admire Margery, who was dark. Many people had, indeed, admired Margery, which gratified Hewson who had married her. Many more people praised her clothes, which still further gratified Hewson who had paid for them. When he married Margery he stamped himself as a man of taste (and a man of charm, too, to have secured her) and he rose still higher in the estimation of his friends; while even men who had thought him a dull dog in the Army or at Oxford began coming to the house again.

It was all very nice, and Hewson often found himself arrested in a trance of self-congratulation; when he came in, in the evenings, for instance, and found firelight flooding and ebbing in the white-paneled hall, and more cards on the table, and heard Parkins moving about in the dining-room, where through the slit of the door the glass and silver on the table sparkled under the low inverted corolla of the shade. Sometimes he would have to put his hand before his mouth, and pass for yawning, to conceal the slow smile that crept irresistibly across his face; as when he stood beside the really good phonograph and changed the records of thudding music for Margery and her friends to dance to. She danced beautifully with her slim, balanced partners; they moved like moths, almost soundlessly, their feet hiss-hissing faintly on the parquet. Hewson's hand brushed across the switchboard, lights would spring up dazzlingly against the ceiling and pour down opulently on to the amber floor to play and melt among the shadows of feet. This had all been very satisfactory.

Hewson never conceived or imagined, but he *intended;* and his home had been all that he had intended. He had a sense of fitness and never made an error in taste. He was not amusing, he did not intend to be an amusing man; but he had always intended to marry an amusing wife, a pretty little thing with charm. He considered that Margery was becoming to him, which indeed she was. He had a fine fair impassive face with the jaw in evidence and owl's eyebrows; he stood for dark oak and white paneling, good wine and billiard-tables. Margery stood for watercolors, phonographs and rosy chintz. They had made a home together with all this; none of these elements were lacking, and thus their home had, rightly, the finality of completeness.

TONIGHT, he dined early, and though eating abstractedly, ate well. He knew the importance of this. They had taken out all the leaves, the table had shrunk to its smallest. Margery had often been away or out, and this evening was in no way different from many others. They brought his coffee to the table, and after coffee he went upstairs, slowly, turning out all but one of the hall lights behind him. He carried Margery's letter, and paused on the landing to look through the list again, because he had decided to get the things packed up tonight and sent off early tomorrow. As he did not wish to give Emily or Parkins Margery's letter (the list being punctuated by irrelevancies) he proposed to get the shoes and dresses out himself and leave them on the bed for Emily or Parkins to pack.

Yes, Margery was not unperceptive; he really did like making arrangements. The sense of efficiency intoxicated him, like dancing. He liked going for a thing methodically and getting it done; jotting down lists on pieces of paper and clipping the papers together and putting them away in the one inevitable drawer.

"You can't think what Hewson's like!" Margery would exult to their friends, waving a glass dessert-spoon at him from her end of the table. "He does everything and finds everything and puts everything away and sends everything off. He's absolutely amazing!"

At this, all the way down the table the shirt-fronts and pink quarter-faces veered intently toward Margery would veer round, guffawing, toward Hewson, and become three-quarter faces, twinkling over with mirth, while the ladies, tittering deprecatingly, swayed toward Hewson, their mirth drawn out into a sigh. "You must forgive us, Mr. Blair," they implied; "but your wife is really *so* amusing!" And Hewson sat on solidly and kept the wine going.

Margery's room sprang into light nakedly; the servants had taken away the pink shades. The curtains were undrawn and Emily, with a housemaid's—one cannot say how conscious—sense of the dramatic, had dropped a sheet over the mirror and swathed the dressing-table; bowls and bottles here and there projected, glacial, through the folds. The room was very cold and Hewson thought of ordering a fire, then recoiled in shyness from the imagined face of Emily or Parkins. He had not entered Margery's room since her departure—he preferred to think of it as a departure rather than a flight, an ignominious scurrying-forth unworthy of the home and husband that she left. He preferred to feel that if his wife sinned, she would sin like a lady.

Margery's directions were minute, though perhaps a trifle incoherent. Hewson sat down on the sofa along the end of the bed to study the list in the light of imminent activity. He must revise it systematically, making it out into headings: "Contents of wardrobe, contents of chest by window, contents of dressing-table drawers." Something caught his eye; he started. Margery's pink slippers, overlooked by Emily, peeped out at him from under the valance of the bed.

From the slippers, connections of ideas brought round his eyes to the fireplace again, he had never seen it black on a chilly evening; Margery had had everything, this was a really good room. She would never have a room like this again; Leslie would not be able to give it to her. What *could* have been the attraction? . . . Well, that was a blind alley; it was no good wandering down there.

Everybody's Magazine, June, 1924

She had written: "I never quite know what you wanted me for."

That statement amazed Hewson; it simply amazed him. He got up and walked round the room, staring at the shining furniture, challenging the pictures, thinking of the library fire, the dancing-floor under the downpour of light, the oval table in the dining-room, compassed about for him always with an imaginary crowd of faces. Surely the sense of inclusion in all this should have justified Margery's existence to her. It was not as if he had ever bothered her to give him anything. He had assumed quite naturally that this sense of being cognate parts of a whole should suffice for both of them. He still could not understand where this had failed her.

He could not conceive what Leslie had held out to her and what she had run to grasp.

HEWSON advanced toward his reflection in the wardrobe mirror and they stood eying one another sternly; then their faces softened. "Lonely fellow," Hewson condescended. The ghost of one of his old happy trances returned to his reflection; he saw the slow smile spread across its face, its fine face. That she should have fallen short of this . . .

He tugged at the handle of the wardrobe door and his reflection swung toward him, flashed in the light and vanished. From the dusk within, cedar-scented and cavernous, Margery leaped out to him again as she had leaped up out of the envelope. There were so many Margerys in there, phalanx on phalanx, and the scent of her rushed out to fill this room, usurp the bleak regency of Emily and make the pictures, the chairs, the chintzes, the shadows in the alcove, suddenly significant. He drew out his fountain pen, detached a leaf from his notebook and headed it: "Contents of Wardrobe."

If he had been a different type of man Margery's chameleon quality would, he knew, have irritated him; the way she took color from everything she put on, and not only took color but became it, while shadowing behind all her changes an immutable, untouched and careless self. Now the black dress—Hewson took it down and carried it over to the bed; and its long draperies swept the carpet, clinging to the pile, and seemed to follow him reluctantly—you would have said the black dress was the very essence, the expression of the innermost of her, till you met her in the flame-color.

He took down the flame-color next and could hardly help caressing it as it lay across his arms, languishing and passive. The shimmer and rustle of it, the swinging of its pendent draperies round his feet filled him with a sharp nostalgia, though they stood to him for nothing in particular—there had been that evening in the billiard-room. He laid the dress down reverently on the bed, like a corpse, and folded its gauzy sleeves across its bosom.

He was less tender with the one that followed, a creamy, slithery thing with a metallic brilliance that slipped down into his hands with a horrible wanton willingness. He had always felt an animosity toward it since they drove together to that dance. It slid and shone round Margery's limbs as though she were dressed in quicksilver; more beautiful than all the rest, more costly also, as Hewson knew. He let it drip down from his arms on to the bed and creep across the counterpane like a river.

He was summary, too, with the velvety things that followed, weighed down by their heavy fur hems. They were evenings at home to him, tête-à-têtes with their faint, discomfortable challenge; Margery tilting back her chin to yawn, or lolling sideways out of her chair to tickle her dog in the stomach, or shuffling illustrated papers. She would say: "Talk to me, Hewson. Hewson, do talk . . ." And later: "Hewson, I suppose evenings at home are good for one. I'm so sleepy. That does show, doesn't it, how I need sleep?"

He worked more quickly after this, carrying the dresses one by one across the room, laying them on the bed, and pausing after each to compare his list with Margery's. Sometimes the name of a color, the description of a stuff, would puzzle him, and he pored above the two lists with bent brows, unable to make them tally. Reluctantly he would inscribe a question mark. He heard ten strike and began working even faster. He had still to make arrangements with the chauffeur; he liked to be in bed himself by half-past eleven, and he didn't approve of keeping the servants late.

Then, leaning deep into the cupboard, he saw the red dress, melting away into the shadows of the cedar-wood. It hung alone in one corner with an air of withdrawal. Hewson reached out, twitched it down; it hung limp from his hands, unrustling, exhaling its own perfume of chiffon. He stepped back, it resisted for an infinitesimal second, then, before he could release the tension on it, tore with a long soft sound.

It came out into the light of the room hanging jagged and lamentable, the long hem trailing. Hewson had torn it, torn the red dress, of all her dresses. He looked at it in fear and a kind of defiant anger. He assured himself the stuff was rotten, she had not worn it for so long. Had, indeed, Margery's avoidance of the red dress been deliberate?

With what motive, Hewson wondered, had this unique presentation of herself been so definitely eschewed? Did it make her shy—was she then conscious that it stood for something to be forgotten? He could never have believed this of Margery; he was startled to find that he himself should suspect it. Yet he returned to this: she had never worn the red dress since that occasion. He had watched for it speechlessly those ensuing weeks, evening after evening, but it had never appeared again. And here he had found it, hanging in the deepest shadow, trying to be forgotten.

MARGERY had put the red dress down on her list; she had underlined it. It was one of the dresses she wanted to take away to Leslie. Now it was torn, irreparably torn; she would never be able to wear it.

Hewson wondered whether Margery would be angry. He quailed a little, feeling the quick storm of her wrath about him; windy little buffets of derision and a fine sting of irony. She would certainly be angry when she knew, and go sobbing with rage to Leslie; Hewson wondered whether Leslie would be adequate. He debated whether he should pack the dress. Well, since it had admittedly stood for *that* to Margery as well as to himself, let her have it as it was! Hewson's wits stirred—this should be his comment. Why should he let her go to Leslie with that dress, the dress in which Hewson had most nearly won her? It had been pacific, their relationship; neither of them would have admitted a crescendo, a climax, a decrescendo; but there had been a climax, and the red dress shone in both their memories to mark it. He did not think he would let the Margery who lived for Leslie wear the red dress of his own irreclaimable Margery.

Smiling and frowning a little with concentration, he eyed the thing, then gripped the folds in both hands and tore the dress effortlessly from throat to hem, refolded it, and tore again. A fine dust of silk crimsoned the air for a moment, assailed his nostrils, made him sneeze. He laid the dead dress gently down among the other dresses and stood away, looking down at them all.

These were all his, his like the room and the house. Without these dresses the inner Margery, unfostered, would never have become perceptible to the world. She would have been like a page of music written never to be played. All her delightfulness to her friends had been in this expansion of herself into forms and colors. Hewson had fostered this expansion, as it now appeared, that Leslie might ultimately be delighted. From the hotel by the river the disembodied ghost of Margery was crying thinly to him for her body, her innumerable lovely bodies. Hewson expressed this to himself concisely and heavily, as a man should, as he stood looking down at the bed, half smiling, and said, "She has committed suicide."

From boyhood, Hewson had never cared for any thoughts of revenge. Revenge *was* a very wild kind of justice, and Hewson was a civilized man. He believed in the Good, in the balance of things, and in an eventual, tremendous pay-day. At once, the very evening Margery had left him, he had felt the matter to be out of his hands, and wondering quite impartially how much she would be punished had sat down almost at once to write and make arrangements with his sister. He had not, these last few days, felt sorrowful, venomous or angry because he had not felt at all; the making of these and other arrangements had too fully occupied him. He had always very lucidly and reasonably contended that the importance of mere feeling in determining a man's line of action is greatly overrated.

Now, looking down, he watched the dresses, tense with readiness to fall upon them if they stirred and pin them down and crush and crush and crush them. If he could unswervingly and unsparingly hold them in his eyes he would be able to detect their movements, the irrepressible palpitation of that vitality she had infused into them. They lay there dormant; only the crimson dress was dead. He bent, and touched the creamy trickle of the ball-dress; his finger dinted it and a metallic brightness spurted down the dint, filling it like a tide. He drew back his finger, cold yet curiously vibrant from the contact. The folds were cool; and yet he had expected, had expected . . . He brought down his outspread hands slowly; they paused, then closed on handfuls of the creamy stuff that trickled icily away between his fingers. The dress lay stretched out and provocative and did not resist him, and Hewson with dilated eyes stared down at it and did not dare to breathe.

He turned and crossed the room on tiptoe, peered out into the darkness of the trees, then drew the blinds down. He glanced round secretly and stealthily at the pictures; then he went over to the door and peered out, listening intently, on to the landing. Silence there and silence through the house. Shutting the door carefully behind him, he returned to the bedside.

It seemed to him, as he softly, inexorably, approached them, that the swirls, rivers and luxuriance of silk and silver, fur and lace and velvet shuddered as he came. His shadow drained the color from them as he bent over the bed.

HALF an hour later, Hewson once more crossed the landing and went up to the box-room to look for Margery's trunk. He was intent and flushed, and paused for a moment under the light to brush some shreds of silver from his sleeve. He seemed unconscious that a wraith of flame-colored chiffon drifted away from his shoulder as he walked, hung in the air, and settled on the carpet behind him. He came down again from the box-room breathing hard, bent beneath the trunk, and as he reëntered the bedroom something black and snake-like lying across the threshold wound round his feet and nearly entangled him. Approaching the bed, his steps were once more impeded; sometimes he was walking knee-deep.

He pitched the trunk down in a clear space, propped it open and began to pack. Many of the fragments, torn too fine, were elusive; he stooped with the action of a gleaner to gather them in armfuls, then thrust them down into the trunk. The silks—they seemed still sentient—quivered under his touch; the velvets lay there sullenly and sometimes, when he heaped them in, dripped out over the edge of the box again. Here and there an end of fur ruffled into deeper shadows under his excited breath. When he had amassed everything, Hewson beat with the flat of his hands upon the pile to make it level, spread tissue paper over it and locked the trunk. Then he rang for Parkins and sat down to wait. He reread Margery's list once again, folded it, and put it away in his pocketbook.

THAT night, Lippit the chauffeur received his instructions. He was to take Mrs. Blair's box to the station at half-past eight the following morning and dispatch it to the given address per luggage in advance, having taken to the same station a ticket to be afterward destroyed. This extravagance Hewson deplored, but the exigencies of the railway company demanded it. The trunk was strapped and corded and placed in the back hall in readiness for its early departure, and Hewson, seated comfortably at his table by the library fire, printed out two labels in neat black characters, then himself affixed them to the handles of the trunk.

"Would there be anything more, sir?" inquired Parkins, standing at attention.

"No, not tonight," said Hewson courteously. "I am sorry to have kept you late, Parkins; you had better go to bed."

"Thank you, sir."

"And oh, Parkins!"

"Sir?"

"You had better ask Emily to sweep out Mrs. Blair's room again tonight. The carpet needs sweeping; she should pay particular attention to the carpet."

Hearing the hall clock strike eleven, Hewson turned the lights out, quenched the astonished face of Parkins, and went upstairs to bed.

Tragedies Bequeathed by Our Forbears

The Devonshers

Bringing a Family Skeleton into Bright Daylight May Mean Suffering; but Clear Knowledge by Neighbors Is Better Than the Worst Suspicions

By Honoré Willsie Morrow

Illustrations by Ernest Fuhr

Begin this serial with any instalment. The story up to this point is here.

TO PETER COLBAITH, major in the British army, the Devonsher family was a puzzle. Peter, crippled in the World War, came to Wyoming to buy horses for the Allies. There he found opposition, or at best indifference and the inclination to profit by the Allies' need. To this there was one conspicuous exception: Eve Devonsher, a girl of Oregon Trail stock—last of her family, save her widowed mother—broad-minded and public-spirited, and deeply interested in horses. She accompanied him and endeavored to persuade the ranchers of the wickedness of profiteering.

Peter found a general admiration for the abilities of the family from the time of her grandfather Carter Devonsher, who came from England and played a leading part in the early development of Oregon Territory. But along with this he found in the minds of many a distinct distrust of the whole family and even a growing antagonism toward Eve.

After two serious quarrels, with Angus Duncan and her fiancé, both occasioned by her belief in the righteousness of the Allied cause and her efforts in behalf of Major Colbaith, she left home avowing her intention of going to France. Two weeks after, Angus Duncan was mysteriously killed in his corral and his horses disappeared; and when his father-in-law Sid Brownell, the sheriff, acting upon surmise, led the major and Judge Jones out to an old haunt of Eve's, they found her about to break camp.

The grounds for suspicion and the feeling of the community against her were so strong that she was put in jail. This was more than the proud, sensitive girl could endure, and she escaped and rode for Canada, stopping only when she reached the isolated ranch of old Tom Maine, a friend of her dead father. But, while he openly approved the girl's purpose, he really penetrated her false pride and aroused her to return and face trial. He promised to follow, himself.

MARY DEVONSHER ran from the bedroom with a little cry and flung herself into Eve's arms.

"Eve! Eve! What made you come back when you were safe away?"

Eve clasped her mother close, but did not reply. She only looked at the judge over Mary's head, with the little baffling smile he knew so well.

"That was a scurvy trick you played us, Eve," said the old man.

"How can you call it that?" protested Eve. "I warned you when you put me in a cell."

"That's no way to treat the law! Warning it!" snorted the judge. "Well, anyhow, you're back. You come along over to the jail with me, and no nonsense."

There was a halting step in the doorway

and Major Colbaith appeared. Mary Devonsher drew away from Eve. "Now maybe we'll get justice done!" she exclaimed.

The Englishman stared at Eve. She was wind-burned and her eyes showed strain. Otherwise he could not see that she looked any the worse for whatever her trip might have been. He walked toward her, silently holding out his hand. Eve clasped it, still smiling.

"I suppose," she said, "that it is a little difficult to be tactful under the circumstances. You can hardly say, 'Welcome home!' and you don't want to demand, 'Where've you been?' "

The major laughed. "Perhaps it's permitted to ask if you had a pleasant trip?"

"I had a wonderful trip," returned Eve soberly. "I wore Shawnee to a shadow but I seemed to thrive on it. It's curious that I've not been overtaken."

"Sid made enough noise racketing over the state to warn you if he came within twenty miles," said Judge Jones. "He didn't want to find you and I told him so."

"Did Sid carry on alone?" asked Eve, glancing at the judge's spurs.

"Yes! I was willing to let Nature take its course," replied the old man. "But now you're back, Eve, there's going to be no nonsense that I can prevent. You can manage Sid, but you can't manage me."

"I'm going to stand trial," said Eve quietly. "I suppose Uncle Jim has washed his hands of me."

"No, he hasn't!" It was the major who spoke slowly. "He didn't think the trial ever would come off now. But he will stand by you, especially under these circumstances."

"Meaning what?" demanded the judge.

"That Miss Devonsher's come back of her own will, of course!" Peter's voice showed surprise at the older man's query.

"Eve, what did bring you back?" cried her mother. She was thinner and more tight-lipped than ever. And her eyes looked as if she had no more tears left to shed.

Eve looked at her audience of three. The judge she did not pretend to fathom. But, after all, she had no better friend than the major so far had shown himself to be, and as for her mother— A sudden rush of tears suffused Eve's eyes as she looked at Mary.

"I came back," she said haltingly, "I came back because old Tom Maine made me see myself in a new light."

"Old Tom Maine!" repeated her mother wonderingly. "Is he still alive?"

"Yes, and still living in the cabin up in the Wind River country where father and I visited with him when I was a little girl."

"How did he make you see yourself?" asked the judge.

"As an extremely complete fool," replied Eve, with a faint twinkle in her eyes.

Judge Jones grunted. Peter watched Eve in silence. Mary shook her head.

"It's killing me!" she murmured.

Eve took her mother's hands in hers. "Don't take it that way, mother, don't! Make me feel that you have faith in my innocence, and that you don't fear for the outcome of the trial."

"I still don't see why you came back," Mary half whispered.

"Just to prove that I'd nothing to run away from but my own cowardice. Don't you see?"

"I thought you were on your way to France by now. Oh, Eve! I haven't your endurance. I'm getting old and I'm tired of agony."

A little sob escaped Eve. She clasped her mother in her arms again and over her gray head looked appealingly at the two men.

Peter cleared his throat but before he could think of the tactful thing to say or do, the judge said tersely:

"Well, anyhow, you are here, Eve, and here you shall stay. In the jail, I mean. Are you ready to start?"

"I'd like a bath and a change, first, and something to eat."

Mary immediately turned toward the kitchen. "The judge has kept Lee Fu in jail ever since you left," she said. "It didn't matter to him and Sid how the work fell on me. But getting a meal for you, Eve, is a different matter."

"Poor mother! Poor Lee Fu!" exclaimed Eve.

"Poor Lee Fu!" snorted Judge Jones. "He's lain on his back smoking and reading Chinese poetry ever since you left. He's in a state of bliss. But I'll end that. He comes back to the kitchen this afternoon. So get yourself cleaned up, Eve."

WHEN Eve came out to eat the meal her mother had prepared she brought a suitcase and was wearing a frock instead of the frayed riding breeches and blouse.

It was wool and of the dull green color that Peter had grown to associate invariably with Eve.

She finished her meal, kissed her mother and said, "I'm ready, judge."

As Eve and the judge, followed by Peter, emerged from the cottonwoods that screened the hotel, a woman screamed from Sid's garage: "My God, there's Eve! They've got her! They've got her again." And Minnie Duncan, a black figure against the budding green of the war gardens, started wildly across the Plaza, screaming as she came.

The judge paused. Faces appeared from everywhere. Eve would have pressed on, but the judge put a detaining hand on her arm. "I'll just settle this hysterical stuff now," he said.

Two or three men, Henry Worth among them, appeared from the saloon. Women in checked gingham house dresses rushed out of their yards. Children ran shouting toward them as though a circus had come to Antelope Basin. Eve stared at the beautiful bulk of Gray Bull, her cheeks flushed, lips a little uncertain; but she did not speak.

Minnie paused before the group, still screaming breathlessly: "Got her! Got her again!"

Judge Jones left Eve to take Minnie by the arm. He shook her none too gently and she turned on him furiously.

"Take your hand off me, Judge Jones!"

"You're coming along to jail with me, Minnie Duncan."

"Me? Me? Me?"

"Yes, you! You're a public nuisance and I'm going to lock you up."

Minnie choked back a scream and stared at the judge. His face was working and his one eye burned.

"I'm sick of your hysterics!" he roared. "I'll lock you up, by the Eternal, until I need you for a witness. I'll put you where you can't disturb me nor Eve nor the public peace, for one while."

The judge appeared beside himself with anger. No one ever before had seen him so. It awed the crowd and Minnie turned white.

"You can't do it. My father's the sheriff."

"Can't? You'll see! I'll arrest him too for his devilish inefficiency." He turned to the crowd. "As for the rest of you innocent bystanders—disperse!" He shouted the last word in a voice that echoed from the surrounding hills.

Men, women and children slunk away. Minnie, trembling, began to whimper.

"It was my own husband she killed!"

"Dry up!" roared Judge Jones. "March, now, for the jail. I'll show you and the rest of this town that you are to have decent consideration for a person on trial for her life."

Minnie's whimper changed to sobbing.

"Judge," said Eve in a low voice, "get Minnie's promise that she'll behave and let her go."

"She doesn't know a promise when she makes one!" exclaimed the judge.

"Yes, I do," sobbed Minnie.

"And besides"—the unquenchable twinkle appeared in Eve's eyes—"I don't want my privacy in the jail intruded upon. There isn't room in the same jail for me and Minnie."

JUDGE JONES looked at Peter, who stood impassively as a porter, holding the suitcase. The judge's one eye became as expressionless as Peter's. He dropped his hand from Minnie's arm. "I'll take no promise from her. But I guess she understands me now. Minnie, you go home and stay there."

Minnie started back among the war gardens toward the garage and the progress of the trio toward the courthouse was not interrupted again. Eve trembled as she crossed the threshold of her cell but she said nothing; and the two men went away and left her alone.

She pushed the suitcase under the bed, then sat down and stared at the green wall that seemed so hideously familiar. After a long moment of this she took a copy of Kipling's *Seven Seas* from the suitcase, opened it and resolutely fastened her eyes upon it. The book was well worn, an old friend, but Eve could not concentrate her mind upon the "Song of the English." Shortly, she was staring again at the green wall, contemplating the fate that had fettered her since her earliest memory.

Suddenly she jumped to her feet. "I can't endure this!" she exclaimed. "What is it? Who am I? What is the curse on me? That's what I've got to face that's worse than murder! As for Angus—hah!" She snapped her fingers with an open contempt that ended in a sudden clasping of her hands against her face.

"I can't! I can't! Out of doors I can throw it off. Everything returns to normal. In here, I'm a caged beast, with a beast's thoughts."

She dropped her hands, fists clenched, to her sides and looked about her wildly. Then with a sob, she fell to her knees beside the bed, head on her outstretched arms.

"God!" she whispered. "God! God! If you are there, help me. Don't let me lose my head. God, help me! Help me to keep my head!"

After a moment, still kneeling, she pulled the Kipling firmly toward her and opening it at random, read aloud:

"We have strawed our best to the weeds unrest,
   To the shark and the sheering gull,
If blood be the price of admiralty,
   Lord God, we ha' paid in full."

"If blood be the price of admiralty!" Eve dropped the book and again sat staring at the green wall. Her face worked and cold sweat covered her forehead. This would not do. The resolution that had overcome her panic before, that had brought her back from old Tom Maine to Willy Jones, must not fail her now. If only she could see the hills from her cell!

Slowly the tensity of Eve's face relaxed. Slowly the old look of purposefulness returned to her drooping lips and at last, still half kneeling, half sitting beside her bed, her head upon her arm, she slept.

Judge Jones, coming to her door, gazed at her in silence. When Peter joined him, they gazed together.

"If it should be that she wasn't guilty," whispered the judge, "why, somebody ought to kill me."

Peter nodded earnestly. The judge's one eye encompassed the nod somewhat sardonically; then he whispered: "What I want you to do is to make her talk freely to Jim Poindexter when he gets here tomorrow morning. I'm going to begin work on the jury not later than tomorrow afternoon and push this thing through before she breaks down."

Again Peter nodded. And so it came about that when Eve opened her eyes they fell not upon the blank green wall but upon the blond head of the Englishman, who was seated on the foot of the cot.

Eve blinked, lifted her head and smiled. "I've discovered something," she said. "It's a game."

"Really!" Peter smiled, too.

"I can bring the hills into my cell and they give me as much as they do when I go to them. I was climbing Gray Bull, clear to the top, when I fell asleep."

"When I was in hospital," said Peter, "I used to put myself into a decent frame of mind by closing my eyes and walking along a path through the beech copse below the lawns at home. At the end of it, you get a stunning view of the house. I suppose while I was in hospital I walked that path a hundred times or more."

Eve slowly rose to sit beside Peter. "You've been through Inferno, too," she said.

PETER was silent for a moment; then he began: "I talked a goodish bit with Poindexter while you were away. He is a mildly intelligent man and a sincere friend of your family. If I were you, I'd trust him fully."

"I do trust him, fully and with gratitude. As much, at least, as I can trust a man who thinks I'd steal horses and do murder. I told him what there was to tell. I'm a perfectly simple person. Uncle Jim and the judge want to make something complicated out of it all."

"You are not a simple person! Really. Your life is too intricately associated with the history of this part of Wyoming to be anything but complicated."

Eve shook her head. "You've been listening to Willy Jones. He's a lawyer by training. More than that, he was born with a legal mind. The psycho-analysts have nothing on the judge! He sees a motive that influences somebody in the howl of a coyote or in the wind sifting dust from a sod roof. Also he considers himself a philosopher on history. I taught history in our school here, and he was always discussing the rise and fall of nations with me. I enjoyed it then. But now—"

"I'm afraid that the old gentleman does look upon the trial as an opportunity for an historical survey." Peter's voice was rueful.

"Don't I know!" exclaimed Eve. "And he's not alone. Why, a murder trial is a godsend in this lonely country! It will overshadow any rodeo or pioneer celebration. It's horrible. I can't realize that it's all focused on me."

"Don't try to." Peter's voice was comforting. "Just promise me that you'll help your lawyer get a list of witnesses together and that you will be keen to challenge while the jury is being impaneled. Then we'll talk about something else."

"I can promise that, of course." Eve drew a shuddering breath. "What shall we talk about? The war or the weather?"

"Tell me, quite in confidence, of course, where you went on this madcap venture of yours."

"I went as I told you to see old Tom Maine who worked as a fur trapper for my grandfather, when he was with the Hudson's Bay Company at Fort Jason. He went through the Antelope Massacre with my grandfather, too. And he knew your grandfather."

Peter brightened. "I'd like to talk to him. I scarcely remember grandfather. He died in Australia."

"He seems always to have been interested in colonization," said Eve thoughtfully. "You'll be amused, perhaps, at what the old fur trapper said." She repeated old Maine's description of Sir John.

Peter chuckled, then said soberly, "I'm extraordinarily sorry that England gave up the Oregon Territory."

"Why, she hadn't a chance in the world to hold it!" protested Eve.

"Oh, but she did! Really! I've often wondered what happened. I suppose your grandfather bungled things!"

Eve flushed painfully. Peter, astonished at the flush, said quickly: "I'm not being personal. You must not look so."

"You British are always so cocksure!" protested Eve.

"Oh, really, not at all! That was just a shot in the utter dark. We just muddle along, you know. Quite as your newspapers here in the States have accused us of doing."

"And did you ever live in Australia? Come, major; you know my affairs intimately! And you have told me so little of your real self before the war."

"Intimately? No one knows you or your affairs intimately. I'm rather glad of that. Yes, Miss Devonsher, I have lived in Australia and in India."

Everybody's Magazine, June, 1924

"I don't want to appear too colloquial." Eve was smiling. "But how come?"

"Family custom, I suppose, basically. We've always been in the Colonial end of government matters. It's a dog's life. When I'm at my work I'm always dreaming of the beech copse and the old gray house. When I'm off duty and walking through the beech copse, I'm quite mad for the look of things on the other side of the world."

Eve nodded. "I wonder if it wasn't that way with my father. Only he had no normal outlet for it."

"Surely there was another alternative than—" Peter's slow voice hesitated. Again the painful flush had suffused Eve's face. "What a rotter I am!"

"I can't blame you," sighed Eve. "I was thinking the same thing." Then, her mind reverting to her father's fate, her eyes suddenly widened with horror. "Supposing," she exclaimed, "supposing the jury, too, believe I did that thing! Major—if they do, will you still keep faith in me?"

Peter seized her hand and held it in both his palms. "They never will find you guilty."

"But they may!" Eve looked wildly around the cell. "They may. That couldn't be more horribly impossible than this putting me in a cell. Me! Major, promise me!"

"I promise you," replied Peter in a low voice. He fell to rubbing Eve's cold fingers with his warm palm. "When moments like this come, you have your hills to turn to," he went on.

"I know," panted Eve, fighting for self-control. She closed her eyes and the emerald lake high in the fastnesses of the Sioux flashed before her. Standing in high isolation on the crest of Gray Bull she gazed on its translucent depths until her breath came normally. "I wish you'd climb to the top of Gray Bull and share what I see."

"I'll go tomorrow while you are busy with other matters," returned Peter, promptly. "And when you are alone again, I'll come to tell you what I've seen."

"Will you?"—eagerly. "But—it's a hard climb at the crest and you are lame."

"What's a little lameness between friends!" exclaimed Peter. He rose as Lee Fu appeared with a tray. "Good night, Miss Devonsher."

"You are very good to me," said Eve. "If I live, I'll try to show you how grateful I am."

"You couldn't give us back Oregon, could you?" asked Peter, chuckling.

"Don't hesitate to ask for anything you want!" returned Eve.

NO ONE came during the evening and at nine o'clock Eve heard the judge snoring from a cot that had been moved into his office. Then she went to bed herself.

The pipe of birds wakened her at dawn and she was dressed long before her breakfast tray arrived. She had not finished with this when Jim Poindexter appeared.

"Well!" he smiled jovially. "Feel better for your little joy-ride? Understand you crossed half the state."

"Yes, I feel much steadier on my feet, as it were. Does Sid know I'm back, Uncle Jim?"

"Guess he does by now. He rode all dejected-like past the hotel this morning and the judge hailed him. I couldn't tell from Sid's expression whether he was going to laugh or cry."

"I played him a mean trick, from his point of view. What do I do next, Uncle Jim?"

"Let me have as much frank talk with you as I need and wish."

"Yes," agreed Eve. "You can begin right now."

"Eve, are you going to stand up to this now, like the fine soldier you were meant to be, and not worry the judge and me about your scuttling to the tall timbers at unexpected moments?"

"Yes, I am," replied Eve, giving Poindexter a straight look from her clear blue eyes.

He held her gaze appraisingly. "You know that was one of your father's weaknesses. You couldn't always be sure you could put your finger on him."

"His word was good, wasn't it?" asked Eve, flushing.

"Absolutely, but he almost never gave it! . . . Why did you run away, Eve?"

She was standing with her back against the wall, opposite the cot. At this query she lifted her head to stare at the square of sky in the high-set window. Her eyes were of the same clear azure as the heavens, and Poindexter, as he observed this, gave his great white head a little jerk, as of sadness or apprehension.

Eve had told Peter that she was a simple person; yet now, as she sought to answer the lawyer frankly she found it very difficult to phrase her motives. However, she believed she was doing her best when she turned to him and blurted out the word "Fear!"

Jim nodded. "How did you overcome the fear?"

"That's difficult to tell, Uncle Jim. There was shame and—and pride and hopelessness. Do you know old Tom Maine?"

"By reputation only. An old hermit, eh?"

"Yes. Living on memories. 'So!' he said. 'The last of the Devonshers is running off to Canada! You're right. No use taking punishment you don't have to—I know you ain't guilty, but of course you showed yourself guilty to those folks in the Basin by running away.' I had a whole evening of that sort of thing with him. In the morning I started back."

Jim pushed his hand through his rumpled white hair. "Where were you going, Eve?"

"To Vancouver. Round the world to France. It was quite feasible."

Jim nodded again and then shook his great mane. "Hang it, Eve! Now, you've got me guessing! I'd give anything to know what actually goes on inside that lovely red head of yours. But I know one thing! If that old dinosaur of a Johnson thinks he's going to have a walk-away with this, he's mistaken. In the first place, Eve, if the very worst comes, Jones won't let you get anything but the minimum for manslaughter. And they'll get even that after the damnedest fight on motive and character ever pulled in this state. If Jones wants some dirty linen washed, believe me it's going to be done in a way that will satisfy even his love of the indirect."

That afternoon the examination of talesmen began.

Eve had not seen the sheriff since her return. She knew that he had refused to express himself to the judge about her escape. She felt very sure that, however much Minnie and her mother may have made him suffer, he was only half relieved by her coming back to Antelope. Eve herself felt half ruefully, now that she had attained a certain rigid poise, that, in spite of all that lay between the Brownells and the Devonshers, she had given Sid a somewhat rough deal. When, therefore, she followed Jim Poindexter into the courtroom, she was not surprised to have Sid ignore her existence.

There seemed to be a great number of people moving about in the afternoon sunshine which flooded the room. For a few moments after she was seated beside Jim, Eve seemed to see all the familiar faces dancing grotesquely behind motes of light. But finally Sid in dusty riding clothes, his khaki shirt black with sweat, emerged from the confusion. He shook hands with Jim and said, his beautiful voice a little husky from dust:

"I guess they're all here. No spectators, just talesmen according to judge's orders."

Eve put her hand on the sheriff's great arm. "I'm sorry, Sid," she said.

His lips twitched. He shrugged his shoulders and turned away, and the dreary process of choosing the jury began. To Eve it all was unreal. She had known some of the talesmen since her babyhood. There were, however, many newer ranchers among the crowd and these were the men Jim Poindexter hoped he could force to form the major part of the jury. He and Colonel Johnson fought and snarled over some of the talesmen like two old dogs over a bone.

Eight men had been agreed upon by Jim Poindexter and the colonel when Eve uttered her first comment.

"There are no women, Judge Jones."

"There are three taleswomen," replied the judge. "Be patient."

A moment later Mrs. Johnny Miller was drawn. She was a stout woman of forty, very fair, with a huge pompadour of drab hair half concealing a well-shaped forehead. She wore a brown voile dress that fitted her well. For the rest she was a work-scarred ranch wife. And she was very sure that she had no opinion as to whether or not Eve Devonsher killed Angus Duncan. She offered the information that it was canning season and she'd rather be at home tending to her family and let the men run the jury business. All this without a glance in Eve's direction.

Jim Poindexter hesitated, then turned to Eve and whispered: "I'm afraid of a woman on a jury that tries a woman. What kind is she? I know her history. I mean what does she mean to you?"

"I saved her and her baby for her when Doc Peabody was away two years ago," answered Eve.

"Does she like you?" whispered Jim.

"How should I know? I'd suppose it highly improbable after the experience of the past six months!" Eve's whisper and smile were bitter.

Jim turned back to the taleswoman and a few moments later she was agreed upon as a juror. Mrs. Miller sighed, gave Eve a long look which ended in a deliberate wink that escaped every one but Eve and said in an irritated way, "I hope Johnny can keep the home together."

Eve suddenly chuckled.

FOUR of the jurymen that had now been settled upon were known to Eve only by name. They were "easterners," most of them from Missouri, who were trying out dry ranching in the valley west of Battle Mountain. None of them had lost horses in the recent raiding. Indeed, dry farming was not sufficiently lucrative, as one of them pointed out, to support a tempting horse. The other four men had known the Devonshers root and branch for two generations. They were ranchers from over Antelope Peak way. Hadn't lost any horses. Never had done business with Angus Duncan. Had no opinions about Eve or Angus or anything under heaven. Eve eyed them but said nothing. The son of one she had loaned the money for his first year at the university at Laramie. The daughter of another had had a schoolgirl crush on Eve the previous year in the high school. A third was unmarried and had years before proposed to Mary Devonsher. Eve did not know whether her mother's refusal had angered the man or not. His ranch was remote in the hills and he seldom appeared in the Basin. The fourth man was the stage driver Lame Jack, an old schoolmate of Eve's. In his boyhood he had been a bully but he had been lamed by a horse and his crippled condition, or the fulness of years had softened him. He was a quiet fellow, much given to reading in his long rides over the trails. It was not mentioned during his examination that Eve had coached him through the university extension course in veterinary work that he had completed several years before.

These eight men and Mrs. Johnny Miller chosen, there remained two women among the half-dozen talesmen. One was a teacher in the Antelope Basin High School. She had been devoted to Howard Freeman. Eve whispered bluntly to Jim that this person would not do. The other was old Mrs. Sherman, who owned the motion-picture hall. She had been a great horsewoman in her day and, keeping no horses in her old age, she had ridden the Princess horse in the rodeo the previous year in an Old Timers' competition. She had won the prize and had shown an affectionate interest in the Princess horse ever since. Mrs. Sherman was made the tenth juror. Of the two remaining jurors that Jim and the colonel finally agreed upon about nine o'clock, one was a Mormon who recently had taken up a homestead on the east flank of old Battle. The other was an old trapper who said that he had no use for Devonshers, Duncans or any other Basin folks. They'd driven all the fur-bearing critters out of the country. Both lawyers laughed and agreed upon him.

The other talesmen were dismissed and Sid led the twelve over to the tavern. Eve was left alone with Judge Jones and the two lawyers. Colonel Johnson shook hands with her, cordially.

"Well, Eve! This is a nice position you've put me in!"

Eve smiled. "It's fair, from Judge Jones's point of view, for the other side to have a fighting chance. You are the only man who'd have that chance with Uncle Jim."

Both the lawyers laughed but the colonel sobered quickly to say, "I shall fight as though I'd never known you, Eve."

Judge Jones spoke impressively. "Don't fool yourself, Eve, as to the probability of the colonel turning soft."

"I'm fooling myself about as much as a rabbit fools herself with fifteen of the best Wyoming greyhounds after her," replied Eve. "Sport for the greyhounds—"

"Not that at all," snapped Colonel Johnson. "You've put yourself in an equivocal position before the neighbors, Eve. You've got to stand for an investigation by the neighbors. We can't spare you merely because we like you or because you are a stunning person to look at."

"I assure you, colonel"—Eve's eyes twinkled—"that I have no doubts as to your ruthlessness, or as to your blindness to feminine charms."

"Oh, take her away, judge!" snorted the colonel.

Judge Jones led Eve back to her cell. It was her last friendly word with Colonel Johnson.

As an attraction the trial was, as Eve had prophesied, an event of state-wide interest. People came in cars and sheep wagons and on horseback. They quartered themselves on friends and they overflowed in tents in the environs of the Plaza. Before the matter was finished, a reporter from Cheyenne was monopolizing the telephone wire in the garage for an hour every day and as much as two or three sticks was published in a Denver Sunday paper concerning that remote tragedy and its many ramifications.

MINNIE BROWNELL DUNCAN was the first witness for the prosecution. She wore black and was beginning very slightly to show the promise of motherhood. She cried as she told her story and won a sympathy from the crowd that, however, wavered considerably during the trial. When she had finished her story Colonel Johnson asked blandly, "What caused you to say that the prisoner killed your husband, Mrs. Duncan?"

"My father asked me who was Angus's enemies and I couldn't think of any one but Eve. But I thought she was in France."

"Why did you say Miss Devonsher was your husband's enemy?"

"She told him she hated him in my hearing—and that she'd see to it that he paid to the limit for all the trouble she claimed he'd made for the Englishman."

"By the Englishman, whom do you mean?"

"Major Colbaith." Minnie nodded her head toward Peter, who sat near Eve at the side of the room.

"Will you describe the quarrel between your husband and Miss Devonsher? Just tell it in your own way."

Minnie, who seemed to Eve to be thoroughly enjoying herself, settled back in her chair. "Well, Angus was saddling to go after the mail when Eve galloped up with Shawnee's heels fanning his ears he was going so fast. She pulled up like she always shows off, horse sliding on his haunches—"

"Keep to your story and don't comment on the prisoner's peccadillos, Mrs. Duncan," directed Colonel Johnson smoothly.

"Well, Eve pulled her horse up like she was at a rodeo and said to Angus, 'Why did you try to cheat Major Colbaith yesterday?'

" 'I didn't,' says Angus.

" 'I sent him to you as to a friend,' said Eve, 'and you wanted five hundred dollars for Mary Jane and she isn't worth two hundred. What do you plan to do? Get rich on the blood being spilled over there in France!'

" 'You're so darned patriotic,' says Angus, 'you'd better turn English and go to France. In the meantime, mind your own business.'

" 'This is my business,' says Eve. 'It's anybody's business. You'd better fall in line. A man ought to give either his fighting strength or his money to his country when she needs him. You've sneaked out of one. Now let's see you come clean on the other.'

" 'Which of your horses have you given to the British?' asks Angus.

" 'You know I haven't got anything but Shawnee and the Princess horse. I've given Major Colbaith an option on the Princess horse and her colt, after the colt comes, this summer.'

" 'You know I've been trying to buy that mare from you for two years.' Angus was getting real mad now and I didn't blame him.

" 'And you know,' says Eve, 'I wouldn't sell you even a mangy cayuse. You're a brute to a horse like your father before you. You couldn't any more take care of a mare like Princess than a Sioux Indian could.'

" 'Couldn't I?' says Angus. 'Well, maybe I couldn't. And maybe I didn't let the draft get me. And maybe my father did make money in the Spanish-American War, and'—"

"One moment, Mrs. Duncan!" interrupted Colonel Johnson. "You needn't go into all the details of the quarrel."

"Let the witness tell the story her own way, colonel," ordered Judge Jones, tersely.

"But—" protested Johnson.

The judge's one eye registered impatience and the prosecuting attorney nodded at Minnie. She, thrilled by her own importance and the magnificence of Angus's defense, forgot entirely the expurgations carefully ordered by the colonel, drew a long breath and began anew.

" 'And maybe my grandfather did curse Lincoln. But on the other hand, my father wasn't a horse thief and my grandfather didn't lose two hundred fifty thousand square miles of territory for his country either.'

"Angus, he walked right up to Eve when he said this and she says, 'Angus, you'll pay for that the way a man would make you pay.'

"She rode off then and Angus kind of laughed like he was pleased. He said he always knew he'd throw her grandfather in her face some day and he was glad he'd done it. But I told him then that he'd made a dangerous enemy. And I reminded him that once she'd tried to shoot me."

The courtroom, packed to the door, was breathless. Eve was unconscious of the audience that hung on Minnie's words. She was feeling again the epic wrath that had flooded her as the words left Angus's sneering lips. Peter watched her drawn face. He was torn between emotions: sympathy for her suffering and a steadily deepening interest in what the trial might develop of the Devonshers' contacts with the history of the Oregon Trail.

"What was there about this Princess horse that made your husband so eager to own her?" asked Colonel Johnson.

"She's out of that Arabian strain Dave Devonsher brought in here. She'd be a wonderful brood mare if Eve would let her. But Eve's got such a spite against all of us, she didn't want anybody but herself to have any of the strain."

"Pshaw!" murmured Eve. "What childish evidence!"

CHILDISH or no, there were two or three men on the jury who nodded at Minnie's last statement, and who leaned forward, their lips moving as they followed her every word.

"Angus said that he'd get even with Eve by seeing to it that the Englishman never laid hands on the Princess horse. So, sure enough, after Eve left—she said for France—he went down and bought the horse from Eve's mother. Angus said Mary Devonsher was glad to get rid of the horse. That she said it was more trouble to watch and satisfy Eve about than an only child. The Princess horse was up in the pasture the night Eve shot Angus. But I've never seen it since the evening before when Angus started off in the moonlight, leading her." And at the memory of that departure Minnie began to cry again, heavily, like a grieving child.

Everybody's Magazine, June, 1924.

A murmur swept over the room and there were ugly glances cast at Eve. She did not see them. Her eyes too were focused on that moon-drenched departure, on the Princess horse, trembling and half distraught with fear. Peter heard her teeth click together and saw her long brown fingers clench.

After Minnie's sobs ceased, Johnson signified that Jim Poindexter might have the witness. The lawyer for the defense was very red of face but entirely cool in manner.

"I won't keep you but a moment, Mrs. Duncan. About Miss Devonsher's attempt to shoot you. How did that happen?"

Minnie took up the story with gusto. "Eve had a terrible temper. Her father had taught her to use a gun as well as a boy. She was just a regular tomboy, anyhow. In the high school, every year, the boy and girl that stood the highest led the parade in the Memorial Day services. The girl carried the flag and the boy, he was the color guard and carried a rifle. Eve and me were the highest girls in the class one year and Angus, the highest boy. And they had Angus choose between Eve and me for carrying the flag and he chose Eve. And when Eve picked that beautiful flag up, I couldn't help saying out loud that it was disgraceful that a horse thief's daughter should carry it." Minnie's voice rose shrilly. "And I still think so. And quick as lightning Eve took the rifle from Angus and aimed it at me. But Angus struck it up and the shot went through the ceiling. Angus always was wide awake."

"But you did call her a horse thief's daughter, and added that she and her mother were living on stolen money?" asked Jim.

"Yes, I did! It was true!"—with a toss of her head.

"As a matter of fact, you knew that Mrs. Devonsher was paying back slowly the money she'd received from that doubtful source, didn't you?" urged the lawyer.

Minnie looked sulky. "That didn't change the truth of what I said."

"And this spring when you repeated the accusation before the Red Cross meeting you knew that Eve's mother had given a mortgage on the tavern as security for the money and that Eve had devoted all her first earnings as a teacher to lifting that mortgage."

"I forgot that. I was so disgusted at Eve for making a fool of herself."

"You forgot! But you did not forget how the accusation years before had maddened a proud, tortured child to the murder point. You forgot the honorable discharge of debts by the two poverty-stricken women. You forgot that Dave Devonsher was the only man in Antelope Basin with the grit to enter the Spanish-American War and that he had won a distinguished-conduct stripe with the Rough Riders. You forgot everything but your jealous hate and how to hurt."

"Your Honor, I object to the manner and statements of the lawyer for the defense!" shouted the colonel.

"The lawyer for the defense can be righteously indignant at this point, if he wishes to be," said the judge.

JIM cleared his throat triumphantly and went on. "That was an unusual series of statements made by your husband about Miss Devonsher. It must have interested you. Didn't you quiz him about them?"

"Maybe I did. But I had other things on my mind beside Eve Devonsher."

"Did you?"—in a skeptical voice. "Try to recall what Angus's reply was when you asked him about his accusations."

"He told me to mind my business; that I didn't have brains enough to understand what lay between the Devonshers and the Duncans."

Minnie blurted this out, and at the memory of Angus's ugly words she again burst into tears. Jim Poindexter made a note, then nodded to Colonel Johnson, who led the sobbing woman to her seat and called the next witness, Sid. The sheriff was not happy. He breathed through his nose heavily, like a horse that carries too much weight at the girth; and his cheeks were mottled, red and white. He told the story of the finding of Angus's body, of the rousing of his suspicions about Eve and of her arrest. His statement was succinct and careful. He did not forget his drilling as easily as did his daughter. When he had finished his account of Eve's jailing, Colonel Johnson asked, casually:

"Why did you go after Miss Devonsher!"

"It was a hunch. One of those dead-certain hunches that you can't explain."

"Let's see if we can get back to causes. A hunch doesn't make evidence," said the colonel, reasonably. "Your daughter had told you about the quarrel between her husband and Miss Devonsher. Did it strike you that the Princess horse was important?"

"You see"—Sid hesitated—"I hate to talk about the dead—" He looked around the courtroom, helplessly.

"We appreciate your delicacy, sheriff, but in order to establish the prisoner's guilt, it looks as if we'd have to tell things not always laudable about the murdered man. And yet, he was no worse a human being than any of the rest of us. So talk freely. The jury will understand."

"Well, it was like this. I knew how awful fond Eve was of the Princess horse. She'd raised it herself and it was a beauty with all the fine points that Dave Devonsher had been breeding for. But she didn't want to use her for a brood mare. She said that the horse was too high-strung. She'd never make a breeder. Probably never carry a colt to full term. However, when this war broke out and kept on and on, she decided that she'd let the Princess horse go to France with Howard Freeman riding her as an officer—"

Eve drew a quick breath, but all eyes were on the sheriff.

"And, that being the case, she decided to get one colt from the mare before she let her go. So you can see one of the reasons why she wouldn't want to sell that horse to any one. I was surprised so that I could hardly believe it when Mary Devonsher sold her to Angus. Angus never was a man to understand a horse. Nor was his father before him. They had a cruel streak in them that a man breeding fine horses can't have. Now, knowing the kind of horse she was, Angus had no business to drive her four miles up the mountain to that old corral. I can't imagine what he was thinking of. I'd warned him to be careful of her."

"I'd warned him the same way, and he was so mad at me on general principle that he just got his Scotch up and went and did it." Minnie spoke with a note of marital resentment in her voice.

Sid shook his head at her and went on. "Most likely, he saw in it a chance to annoy Eve, though he thought she was in France and anyhow the colt wasn't due for some weeks. However that may be, he did drive the Princess horse up to the old corral and—" Sid stopped and for the first time looked squarely at Eve. And his beautiful voice suddenly became pitying and pleading to an indescribable degree. "I hate to tell it," he said, "but I found what the coyotes had left of the colt, just outside the old branding corral. As if an accident had happened and Angus had put the—er—evidence out there."

EVE, chin up, eyes brilliant and hard, returned Sid's look squarely. Peter saw that her knuckles were white and rigid. The sheriff turned back to the jury.

"So, knowing Eve Devonsher and all her ways with and about horses since she was a child, I was convinced that if she hadn't been in France and she had been riding horses and she had been at the old corral and seen what had happened to the Princess horse, she sure would have shot Angus Duncan."

"And serve him right!" exclaimed Mary Devonsher, sitting behind Eve. "I didn't know that. Oh, I didn't know I could be—"

"Be quiet, Mrs. Devonsher," Judge Jones spoke sternly.

Eve turned and put her hand on her mother's knee. "You mustn't blame yourself for anything, mother!" she whispered. Her manner was perfectly calm but when she turned back to face the court, Peter saw that she was shivering violently.

"Cheerio, soldier!" he murmured.

Eve gave him a quick look in which he saw such gratitude as his words did not seem to deserve.

"What step did your mind take next, sheriff?" This was the suave voice of Colonel Johnson.

"I began to check over the way the horse-running was done and the kind of horses that were being run. Nothing but the Devonsher strain, just like Dave run, eighteen years before. Eve had been terribly troubled in her mind by even more than the attitude of Antelope toward the British." This with a glance toward Peter. "What that trouble was I don't know for sure, but I knew she'd suffered. She's got the Devonsher pride and their habit of keeping their troubles to themselves till they burst. And do something desperate.

"She had the .44 with her. Now, Eve had too much sense to think she could go to France with a rifle in her trunk. I checked over every place by telephone it was likely she would go to have caught a train. That wasn't very sure evidence because she could of flagged the U. P. most anywhere after she struck the railroad. But if she wasn't in trouble there would be no point in her not just going straight up to Cheyenne and starting off clear and in good standing. None of the stations knew anything about her. Then, you see, I knew how Eve and her father and her grandfather always beat it for the open trail when they were in trouble."

Sid shook his head reminiscently. No one moved while his mind turned backward.

"Why, I remember the morning after we buried Dave, her mother came to me to find Eve. She hadn't been home since the funeral. I knew right off that I'd find her in the timber. And I did, in the cedar grove about the cemetery. She'd cried herself sick. Long-legged, red-headed and mad as the devil at everybody. I had to talk an hour to her to get her to give up the idea of going out with a gun after the Indian that had shot at Dave. I finally picked her up and sang to her—'The Oregon Trail,' it was—and she let me take her back to her mother."

SID told this with a note of pride in the fact that he and his voice had been so potent. It seemed to Eve that she could bear no more. She half rose from her seat. Peter put his hand on her arm. Her glance fell on the scar. How infinitely more he knew of horror than did she! She sank back, teeth set.

"And so I made up my mind to go to the cedar ring, as Eve called it, where Dave had made his headquarters eighteen years before and that I'd showed Eve. That's all."

Peter looked at the jury, and wondered if they saw what he saw, that the sheriff was convinced that Eve should be found guilty of partially justifiable manslaughter. The jury, however, had suddenly acquired the look of stolid importance common to juries after the first evidence sways them and this look effectually concealed the earlier expressions of eagerness. The defense waived cross-examination for the moment and Henry Worth was called and told his story. He was clear in speech and entirely indifferent in manner. When he had completed his tale, Colonel Johnson rocked himself on his toes and said:

"Let's clear up one small matter, Henry. You too own a .44 rifle which Peabody saw you cleaning, shortly before the murder, and which you have not been able to produce since."

Henry nodded. "Yes, that .44 has plumb flown. I've looked every place I can think of. Where it's gone, I don't know."

"You'll admit it looks bad?" suggested Johnson.

"I sure do. But I don't know what I can do about it. I shot a coyote that was robbing my chicken yard and put the gun back under the bar. That's the last I saw of it."

"At the inquest," said the colonel, "you said several times that the Devonshers and the Duncans always had hated each other. What did you mean by that?"

"I meant that there was enough hate there to be grounds for a murder."

"Your Honor," cried Jim Poindexter, "I object seriously to the nature of this so-called evidence."

"The Basin country, Mr. Poindexter," returned Judge Jones, "wants the Devonshers either cleared or finally eliminated. In an ordinary criminal trial, I'd uphold your protest. But this is not an ordinary case. A family that has had overwhelming influence in the history of this section of America is being tried for injuring its own good name. Let the witness proceed."

"Your Honor, it's outrageous!" snorted Jim Poindexter, running both hands through his hair and glaring at Henry Worth.

"Legally, it is outrageous," agreed Judge Jones calmly. His one eye swept the breathless courtroom and came to rest on Eve. "But as the matter concerns the greater responsibilities of life, the matter of noblesse oblige obtaining in families that have special gifts which are needed by their country, my stand is, I believe, one of wide justice. Carter Devonsher undertook the welfare of many souls. He founded Antelope Basin. He gave the men and women of this valley their directions. His descendants have attempted to keep the power he assumed." The judge paused. "Eve Devonsher had better potentialities than her grandfather. She is now on trial for horse-stealing that ended in murder. Let's discover, if we can, why Carter Devonsher's granddaughter is in this predicament. Because"—again the keen gray eye traversed the room, pausing for a moment on the window beyond which the ponderous bulk of

Gray Bull lay inert against the heavens, and returned to Eve—"because never in our American history has there been such a lack of right responsibility on the part of Americans gifted with the genius for governing. The Devonshers have that gift. They have failed. To my notion, Eve Devonsher is on trial not only for this crime but for a greater crime that seems to be a family heritage. Let the witness proceed, Mr. Poindexter."

THE young saloon-keeper had not found it easy to answer Colonel Johnson's query. It seemed to Eve that he could not have been coached for this reply and she wondered why.

"The Duncans and the Devonshers always have been enemies," he repeated for the third time.

"How do you know that?" asked Johnson.

"My father told me," finally blurted Henry, his indifference shaken.

"Who was your father, and how could he know about this hatred?" The little lawyer was eying his witness through half-closed eyes.

"My father was John Worth and he worked for Carter Devonsher."

"What work, Henry?"

"Fur-trapping, at first, then herding."

"Well, how would he know about the enmity between the two families?"

Henry's right leg was crossed over his left. He wriggled his right foot restlessly and the jingle of his silver spur sounded clearly through the room. Johnson, teetering back and forth on his slender feet, waited with a sort of relentless patience.

"My grandfather, Elias Worth, was a missionary, a preacher, and he learned about this because he was a preacher."

"Rather in the nature of a confessional confidence? I see! And except for telling your father and your father telling you, the Worth family has always respected that confidence! I call that fine! You have never told it to a soul, eh?"

As if he were helpless to prevent, Henry's eyes turned to Eve. Peter saw her give the saloon keeper a look of power and clarity that startled the Englishman by its intensity. Henry's silver spur jingled again.

"I told Eve, once."

"Why?"

"I wanted her to do something."

Another pause.

"Come! Come! Henry, you may as well get on with the story. It has to be told, you know, and you are only prolonging the agony."

Henry sat in motionless silence, head drooping. After a moment he slowly raised his chin and his pleasant face was suddenly sinister.

"What I told Eve Devonsher was," he said, "that she is my cousin."

"Huh!" Colonel Johnson grunted as though some one had struck him below the belt.

Judge Jones leaned forward and screwed his gray eyes into Henry's face. A sigh swept the room. It was as if total surprise had paralyzed thought for a moment in every one. Then Sid Brownell half rose, glanced at Eve's cold face, put his hand on his hip pocket but was deterred from further action by the hasty voice of the prosecuting attorney.

"We'll take that point up later, Henry."

"Your Honor!" exclaimed Jim Poindexter. "I demand that it be taken up now."

"Let the witness proceed, Colonel Johnson!" snapped Judge Jones.

Johnson shrugged his shoulders. "How are you Miss Devonsher's cousin, Henry?"

"Carter Devonsher was my grandfather."

"Elias Worth was your grandfather!" shouted Sid, no longer able to control himself.

"Be quiet, Sid," ordered Judge Jones. "Don't be a fool."

"Elias Worth married my grandmother!" Henry's quiet voice was full of satisfaction. "She was a Sioux Indian whom Mrs. Carter Devonsher had educated in the old trading station—at Fort Jason, I mean. She became an interpreter there. She was very smart. Elias Worth was a missionary and he had his own reasons for marrying my grandmother. But Carter Devonsher was the father of her only child, John. And John was my father."

"And I suppose," suggested the colonel pleasantly, "that this information was more useful to your family as a secret, than as common knowledge."

Henry did not reply to this and after staring thoughtfully at the quarter-breed for a moment, the lawyer went on: "But this does not explain why the Devonshers and the Duncans were enemies."

"Hugh Duncan, Angus's grandfather, was

factor for old Carter. He came out from England with Carter and was very much on the make. When Mrs. Carter Devonsher started to make trouble about my grandmother and the baby, Hugh Duncan fixed it up so that old Carter's bodyservant was to receive a lifelong annuity from Carter in return for taking on the fathering of the baby, John Worth. It worked all right in one way, for not a living soul ever heard the story from Hugh Duncan or the manservant as long as Carter Devonsher lived. Where the hate came in was that Hugh used this to blackmail money for himself out of old Carter. And I think Hugh's son tried it on Dave Devonsher, Eve's father. And that's how the hate started."

"That's a lie!" shouted the sheriff.

"Sid's grandfather was the bodyservant," added Henry complacently.

Judge Jones pounded on his desk. "Sheriff, if you can't stand the gaff here as well at least as Miss Devonsher, you'll have to leave."

Sid turned a livid face on the judge. "I want to be recalled as a witness before that skunk—"

"You'll have your chance in due time. Proceed with your witness, Johnson."

"Is it your idea, Henry," the colonel asked, "that Miss Eve Devonsher and Angus Duncan knew these facts?"

"Angus tried to blackmail her."

"Do you know that he did?"

Henry nodded his head.

"How do you know it? What convinced you?"

"Oh, everything," replied the quarterbred. "Little things, I've mostly forgotten. Maybe other things in the trial will recall them to me."

"Hum!" Johnson eyed Henry thoughtfully, then turned the witness over to the defense.

JIM POINDEXTER ran his fingers through his hair and rose slowly.

"To go back to the matter of the .44 rifle. What became of it, Henry? Do you know?"

"Yes," returned Henry. "Mary Devonsher took it to throw suspicion on me."

"The fool has gone crazy!" exclaimed Mary.

"Mrs. Devonsher is an extremely intelligent woman," said Jim Poindexter. "If she took the rifle, doesn't it seem plausible to you that if she thought suspicion could be directed to you by the disappearance of the gun, some evidence might be turned up?"

Henry did not reply nor did Jim seem to expect an answer, for he went on complacently enough.

"What did Mrs. Devonsher say when you told her of seeing her daughter at Antelope Springs?"

"Just what I said she said. She cried and asked me to say nothing. Said if I would keep quiet, she'd give me a chance to get the Princess horse's colt."

"Think again, Henry," suggested Jim.

"Well, it will just be my word against hers."

"Not if you tell the truth."

Henry looked out of the window, then back, with the little sinister smile returning to his thin lips. "Mary Devonsher owes me money that she pays a little at a time, so much a month. She said she'd shut down on that, if I didn't keep my mouth shut. My business is poor since the draft, and so I shut up."

Jim Poindexter raised an eyebrow in Mary's direction. She sat bolt upright, thin, eager, worn, cheeks flushed, weary eyes burning, the look of race never more apparent.

"Mrs. Devonsher," drawled Jim, "doesn't look like a person who contracts drinking or gambling debts. However, I'm willing for the moment to let that suspicion rest on my old friend. You and Angus Duncan were good friends, were you, Henry?"

"The best of friends."

"You did a little business with him, now and again?"

"Not much outside of selling him a little Scotch. He was not a real drinking man."

"You didn't sell him beaver pelts, especially after trapping beaver was prohibited by law a while back?"

Henry shook his head.

"Nor Angus didn't try to buy beaver pelts from you?"

"He might have tried, but I preferred to keep within the law."

"I see! You have always had the reputation, Henry, of being a law-abiding citizen, a pleasant, obliging fellow besides. I don't think there is a man in Antelope Basin better liked than you are, excepting Sid Brownell."

Henry grinned with gratification. Jim paused, then shot a sudden question at him.

"Your receiving a monthly stipend from Mrs. Devonsher—you are sure that has no aspect of illegality?"

"Sure!" Henry was still grinning.

"I think, Colonel Johnson, that I've finished for the present." Jim nodded to the prosecuting attorney.

Sid Brownell was on his feet at once. "I demand to be heard again!" he shouted.

Judge Jones looked at his watch. "It's now five o'clock," he announced. "I am sure, sheriff, that Colonel Johnson will be glad to put you on the stand the first thing in the morning. In the meantime, I shall adjourn court until nine o'clock tomorrow."

The judge rose and the spectators filed from the room, to explode in comment and wild surmise as soon as they had cleared the doorstep. Eve, with Peter and her mother beside her, neither stirred nor spoke until Sid had led the jury out and Colonel Johnson had left, deep in conversation with Judge Jones. Then she looked up at her lawyer.

"I fancy," she said, "that even Willy Jones is startled by the avalanche his small slide is developing."

Jim wiped the sweat from his face with a large red silk handkerchief.

"Hang it, Eve, I told you to confide in me!"

"How could I confide in any one?" asked Eve, simply.

Mary Devonsher twisted her hands together. "That sneak of a Henry Worth! My heavens! Will some one please tell me why he's telling all this stuff?"

"That's simple," answered Poindexter. "Henry is an Indian and he's getting even. Eve, for God's sake, tell me what you said when he told you of the bar sinister."

"I laughed at him," answered Eve.

"Did you believe him?"

"I didn't know how much truth there was in it. He told it to me in order to make me marry him. His idea was that I'd even do that rather than expose my grandfather's morals. That's why I laughed at him." Eve paused, then said abruptly, "I am very tired."

"What's going to come of it all? What do you think, Jim?" Mary's voice expressed overwhelming anxiety.

"I don't know what to think. But I want to find out from you, Mary, why you had Henry on your pay roll. It's very unpleasant to learn these little things from a witness for the state."

Peter looked at Mary's exhausted face. "Mr. Poindexter," he suggested, "permit me to take Mrs. Devonsher home to rest before you begin to quiz her."

"Yes, do!" agreed Eve. "And let me rest, too, Uncle Jim, until after supper."

Judge Jones, coming out of his office with Colonel Johnson, heard Eve's plea and nodded.

"We'll call it a day. Come along, Eve. I'd think that even the little green cell would look good, after the last six hours or so."

EVE kissed her mother, and in silence followed Judge Jones down the narrow passageway; and it was almost with a sense of thankfulness that she heard the barred door clang behind her.

It was Peter who brought her supper.

"Well, major," said Eve, as he set the tray beside her, "did you enjoy the—er—laundry work in the court today? Willy Jones has made good his threat."

"Remarkable! How much of this history did Judge Jones know, do you imagine?"

"None of it," returned Eve promptly. "It's all the result of Willy Jones's uncanny suspiciousness."

"You are feeling bucked up a bit!" exclaimed Peter.

Eve shook her head. "It's just that I'm excited by the battle. I loathe it all. They are weaving a net about me with this seemingly irrelevant history. When they've finished it will look as if the only thing left for me, being a mad Devonsher, was to kill Angus."

"In that case, they will exonerate you." Peter lighted his pipe methodically.

"Not at all. They will send me to Rawlins for Heaven knows how many years to expiate all the sins of all the Devonshers."

Her prophecy seemed too probable for denial and Peter could only puff on his pipe in a silence that was rich with sympathy.

"I'll wager that after the experience of today," drawled Peter, "Colonel Johnson is going to be fairly sure of what is to be divulged on the witness stand, at least by his own witnesses."

"How can he be?" asked Eve.

"Without casting any reflections on anybody, don't you suspect that there is a certain amount of collusion in the handling of this case—at least between the lawyers individually and Judge Jones?"

"They all are honest." Eve spoke thoughtfully.

Peter nodded. "Judge Jones is groping after a truth. I wonder what it is! I wonder if he knows himself what he is seeking. This isn't a trial at all. It's a saga. The freedom of the testimony! It would be allowed only by a judge like Jones, and a judge such as Jones could exist only on the frontier."

"You haven't asked me for any comments on the—er—news of the day," said Eve.

"Nor shall I!" exclaimed Peter. "I shall make none myself except to say that I admired you more and more as the day went on."

Eve could think of no response. She could not put into words the sense of sustaining strength she was finding in Peter's presence at the trial. This, in spite of the added sense of humiliation given her by his witnessing the shame of her family.

Peter, however, with the peculiar understanding of Eve that he had felt from the beginning, said, "My presence in Antelope Basin is exciting not a little comment, Poindexter tells me."

"It would, of course." Eve's eyes suddenly twinkled faintly. "It's excited considerable comment from me to myself!"

"You have yourself to blame that I am here"—seriously enough.

Eve's voice showed a faint tinge of amusement. "You mustn't neglect England for me."

"No fear!" drawled Peter. "I might even go so far as to say that I believe my helping you will help England."

"Now, just what do you mean by that?" demanded Eve.

Peter had been sitting as usual on the floor, his back against the wall. He rose now and took one of Eve's hands in both his own.

"Doesn't it seem to you," he asked, ignoring her question, "as if you and I had known each other more than six months?"

"In some ways," replied Eve, "I feel as if I'd known you always. In other ways you still are British and alien to me."

"I'm sorry," said Peter, looking steadily down into her face. "I want to be some day something to you that is quite the reverse of alien. Some day, you are going to say to me, I hope, with a bigger significance than you can realize now, 'Light and look to your saddle.' "

Eve returned his gaze. "The old saying goes"—there was the little humorous lift to the corners of her mouth—" 'Light, *stranger*, and look to your saddle.' "

Peter shook his head obstinately. "No, you will say, 'Light, Peter of England, and look to your saddle.' "

For another long moment they held each other's eyes.

THEY still were staring at each other when Judge Jones came in. "I want to talk to you, major," he said.

Eve started to her feet. "Certainly you won't be stupid enough to drag Major Colbaith into this, Willy Jones!"

"Stupidity is my long suit, Eve!" retorted the judge, twisting his whiskers with one hand while he held the door open with the other. "Let's talk it over in my office, major. Eve, you go to bed."

Peter picked up the supper tray. "Don't be worried, Miss Devonsher," he said. "I can take care of myself. Really. Do try to sleep."

"Sleep!" exclaimed Eve. "Sleep!"

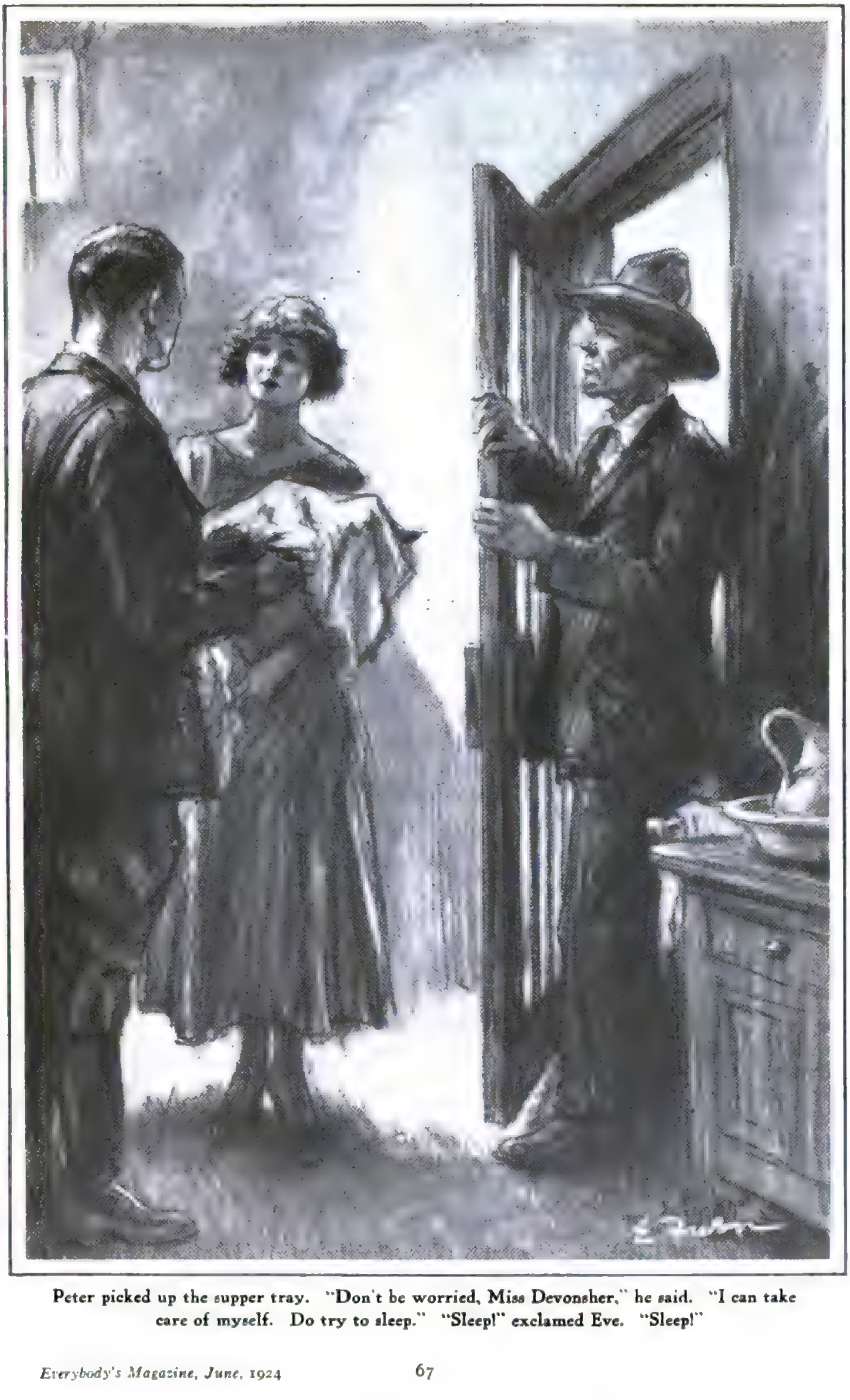
Judge Jones convened court the next morning with exemplary promptness, and Sid Brownell was returned to the witness stand. The sheriff looked haggard, and very, very determined. The defense took up the cross-examination it had waived the day before.

"Sheriff," said Jim Poindexter, "was the matter of Henry Worth's parentage known to you before Henry gave his testimony yesterday?"

"No, it wasn't and it's not known to me now. Anybody that says my father was that kind of a skunk is a liar. He was a servant, all right; but that don't prove that he wasn't a man, because he was. If Henry Worth—"

"One moment, sheriff! Supposing that you take this thing calmly, one step at a time."

"Calmly!" roared Sid's golden voice. "Don't you suppose I know what you're aiming at? You're going to try to prove that we Brownells have a grudge against the



Peter picked up the supper tray. "Don't be worried, Miss Devonsher," he said. "I can take care of myself. Do try to sleep." "Sleep!" exclamed Eve. "Sleep!"

Devonshers and that that's why Minnie and I are Eve's chief accusers."

"But it was the prosecuting attorney who brought out that evidence, sheriff!"

"I don't give a whoop-la in Hades who brought it out—it's a lie. I think just as much of Eve Devonsher as I did of her father and as my father did of her grandfather, and that's a whole lot. Why, do you suppose that if my daughter Minnie had known that, she'd have kept her mouth shut?"

"Yes, I do, sheriff. It's the kind of thing even a woman would keep silence about. What was the relationship of your father to Carter Devonsher?"

"He was his bodyservant"—doggedly.

"Do you remember your father?"

"I certainly do. He lived to be over eighty, and he was Carter Devonsher's bodyservant until the old gentleman died, when father was about sixty. They don't make men like my father any more." Sid's voice became suddenly poignantly sweet. "Why, he was proud of the fact that he had always served the Devonshers loyally and well. And he taught me that if a guy can't be great himself, the next best thing he can do is to serve a great man. He used to say that the kind of service he gave Carter Devonsher was what made England great. And I've taken pride, myself, in doing whatever I could for Dave and for Eve."

"YOU show your father to have been devoted to Carter Devonsher, yet you think he'd not have shouldered the onus of the birth of Henry Worth's father?"

"I know he wouldn't. He hated the Worths, root and branch."

"Why?" Jim shot the question explosively.

Sid blinked. Then he said, carefully: "There were many reasons. In the first place, he despised a man that would marry out of his color. In the second place, he was a Church of England man and Elias Worth was a Methodist and he always was trying to convert my father. Father always called him the Sniveling Methodist."

Jim nodded as if satisfied, then asked suddenly, "Your father never worked after Carter Devonsher's death, did he?"

"No, Carter left him a little annuity."

"But Carter Devonsher was bankrupt before he died. He left no will. He left nothing to his son. The ranch land that Dave owned was what his father gave him at his birth."

"What are you trying to prove now?" demanded Sid suspiciously. "That my father blackmailed him, or what? Let me tell you something. We Brownells stuck by the Devonshers because we believed in 'em, not because they bought us. I believe right now that if Eve Devonsher had been a man she'd have amounted to a whole lot. As it is, there's not a man or woman in Antelope Basin can touch her for—for—"

Jim Poindexter waited patiently. The packed courtroom listened acutely. The members of the jury leaned forward, ears cocked.

The sheriff cleared his throat. "I haven't got a word for it, but it's something her father and grandfather had that makes you feel like they were important. And Eve has done an awful lot for this valley. I'll tell this court right now, I never would have arrested her, if it hadn't been my daughter's husband."

A ripple of amusement went over the room, which Sid did not join by so much as a flickering eyelid. Jim Poindexter seemed to be jumping from point to point in a highly erratic manner.

"Mrs. Duncan, your daughter, testified that indirectly Angus Duncan accused Eve Devonsher's grandfather of having lost two hundred and fifty thousand square miles of territory for England. Did you ever hear Carter Devonsher accused of that? You are under oath, sheriff."

"Yes, he did it and, no matter how he did it, America has cause to be grateful to him."

"If that is so, why did Angus fling it at Eve as an insult?"

"What are *you* trying to prove? That Eve had cause to shoot Angus, and you her attorney?"

Even Judge Jones smiled at this, and Jim Poindexter grinned serenely.

"Since you seem to be in a state of troubled conscience for Eve, yourself, sheriff, I'll promise you that a satisfactory reply to your query will appear later. Perhaps you will not object to answering my last question."

Sid went on in a mollified tone.

"Angus was showing off to Minnie that he knew a lot more Devonsher history than she did. He had no business saying it. There was Sir John Colbaith, Hugh Duncan, Carter Devonsher, and my father knew facts and there never should have been another soul know. But my father always suspected that Hugh Duncan sort of made use of it."

PETER turned a slow look on Eve. She was leaning back in her chair, her hands folded in her lap, her chin drooping above her dull green frock. He touched her knee and she looked up.

"It looks as though an entangling alliance between you and me were about to be developed," whispered Peter. "Too bad Henry Worth didn't conclude to put the birth of John on my grandfather. I feel as if the old gentleman hadn't been a good sport. Really!"

Eve gave him a grateful smile, and her chin did not return to its drooping position for some time.

"Sheriff, that was a serious insult Angus Duncan flung at Eve Devonsher, regarding her father and her grandfather. I am speaking now of your daughter's report of the quarrel between Eve and Angus over the sale of horses to the British. Yet, according to your daughter, Eve showed great self-control."

Sid nodded and Jim Poindexter continued. "Angus accused her grandfather of being a traitor to his country and her father of being that lowest of men to a Westerner, a horse thief. Yet she rode away with only a dignified retort. Now, do you think that if she knew of the plight of the Princess horse, its discovery would have caused her to commit murder when she was able to contain herself during the infamous insinuations that Angus flung at her?"

"I think the Princess horse was the last straw," said the sheriff.

"You have known the Devonshers well. Is it a trait of theirs to get even—to harbor a grudge?"

Sid jerked his head thoughtfully. "No, they couldn't hold a grudge. Especially Eve can't. But Angus could. He never forgave Eve for not marrying him."

A loud snort came from Minnie Duncan and there was much craning of necks in her direction. Sid went on, miserably enough.

"Never was anybody with the quick temper of the Devonshers could carry a grudge. She wasn't cold-bloodedly getting even if she shot Angus. She was losing her temper like I've seen her a hundred times when she was a child. Pick up a rock and throw it at you with blood in her eye. Kiss you and hug you and cry over you afterward. Give you her shirt, too, Eve would, like her grandfather and father before her. God knows, they've done enough for me and mine. I told Minnie so. And now it's me, Sid Brownell, that's putting her through this. But she went too far."

Sid seemed to slump visibly into his chair. Eve's heart sank. It was perfectly obvious that the sheriff was entirely convinced of her guilt.

"Sheriff," asked Jim Poindexter gently, "why did you insist on returning for cross-examination?"

"To prove Henry Worth a liar!" cried Sid with sudden vigor. "He's just trying to get even with Eve for not marrying him, and with me for something that any one but an Indian could have forgotten long ago."

"What is that?" asked the lawyer.

"When Eve and Henry and Minnie and Angus were children—oh, along about the time they were getting ready for high school—I took them on a wild-horse hunt over back of Antelope Peak. Minnie was about as good as the two boys at it. Eve, she was better than the boys. The last night out we made our camp on Antelope Creek at the point where the east flank of Antelope comes like a big red wall close to the banks of the creek. Eagles nest up in that wall, and have as long as I can remember."

Every head in the room gave a little nod.

"It's been a watering place for wild horses as long as there's been wild horses. Well, as I said, we made camp, staked out the wild horses and our own saddlers and settled down. Eve, she had roped a stallion that she claimed was Devonsher Arabian strain. And she was crazy with delight. Henry tried to swap her two little white mares he had brought in for the stallion, but Eve just laughed at him.

"The next morning the stallion was gone. It looked as if he'd pulled up his stake. But Eve came to me and told me on the quiet that Henry had gotten up in the night and had taken the stallion three or four miles up the river and had hidden him in some cottonwoods; that she had followed him but she hadn't dared to tackle him alone.

"I went after Henry right away and, of course, he denied it all. I made him go with Eve and me to the clump of cottonwoods. The stallion wasn't there but you could see where he'd tramped up the ground. Henry stuck to it that Eve had been dreaming, and we came back to camp. I decided to make another day's hunt to let Eve get her another horse.

"THAT evening, sitting around the camp-fire, I sang for an hour or so at the kids' request. I don't know whether I can explain it or not but Henry has always been a little queer about music. When he was very small and he'd hear some cowman sitting on the corral fence playing a mouth organ or an accordion, Henry would sit by him and cry.

"When he was five or six his mother died and I had to sing 'The Oregon Trail' at her grave. Young Henry howled so that his father had to pull a blanket over his head. Everybody round these parts has always joked about that queer freak in him. Folks say that when I'm giving a concert out on the Plaza they can always get free drinks from Henry."

A ripple of laughter swept the room. Henry Worth himself, who had been staring at Sid saturninely enough, grinned his pleasant grin but sobered quickly as the sheriff went on.

"Well, that evening so long ago, sitting round the camp-fire, with the kids all ears, and the smell of the sagebrush, and the stars twinkling down on us, I got to thinking of the old free days and I kept on singing and singing, repeating 'The Oregon Trail' as often as they asked for it. Henry had taken his tears off out of sight of the rest of us. I'd been at it maybe an hour when he came back into the firelight leading the Arabian stallion!

" 'Here's your horse, Eve,' he says. And then he turns on me with a curse and he says: 'You knew what it would do to me, and now you've done it. I'll get even with you if it takes the rest of my life!' Then he went off to his blanket and we never got another word out of him about the matter. Where he'd had the stallion we couldn't guess.

"Of course, it seemed to me just a kid episode. But it wasn't that to Henry. Nothing I could say could make him believe I hadn't sung that horse out of him on purpose. And in a quiet way he's never let up on me, doing little things I couldn't put my finger on but always showing me he'd get me yet."

Sid gave Henry a purple glance, which Henry accepted with a smile. Jim Poindexter turned to Judge Jones.

"Your Honor," he said, running his fingers in pseudo despair through the white masses of his hair, "it is now early in July. My next important case is set for late November. Do you think there is any chance of this trial coming to an end by then?"

Judge Jones gave a complacent grunt. "Don't be impatient, Mr. Attorney. This is not strictly a trial. It's a spiritual round-up."

Jim Poindexter groaned and returned to Sid. "Sheriff, did your father ever admit to you that he was the father of John Worth?"

"No!" shouted Sid. "How many ways have I got to prove Henry Worth to be a liar? I know it wasn't my father because I know who was the guilty man. And it wasn't Carter Devonsher and it wasn't my father."

"Who was it?" demanded Jim Poindexter.

"That I refuse to answer," replied Sid, flatly, "because I couldn't prove it."

Jim glared at the sheriff, looked at Judge Jones's immobile face, glanced at the jury, every member of which was goggle-eyed, with the exception of old Mrs. Sherman, who was knitting and muttering to herself; then he thundered at Sid: "I have finished with you temporarily, sir! We will go into this matter, later."

Sid, with a great sigh, heaved himself up to the water pail near Judge Jones's desk and with deep gurgling sounds drank a dipperful of water. Peter whispered to Eve:

"I shall be called by Colonel Johnson today. But don't be alarmed, please."

Eve's tired eyes widened but that something entirely trustable that she had never missed finding in Peter's eyes reassured her and she nodded acquiescence.

Peter was not called at once, however. A big bearded rancher who gave his name as Arthur Folsom heaved his bulk into the witness chair. He seemed all black hair except for a pair of light blue eyes which seldom blinked.

"You have lost horses, recently, Mr. Folsom?" asked the colonel.

"Three—a mare and two geldings."

"Tell the jury how you lost them, Mr. Folsom."

"I'd been using them for plowing. They were light for such work, so when I'd finished the job, I put them in a big corral I've got in the woods to rest up."

"One moment, Mr. Folsom! What woods?"

The unblinking blue eyes turned from the jury to Colonel Johnson.

"My ranch, as everybody here knows, is on the east flank of Gray Bull Mountain. It runs west up the mountain clear to the Forest Reserve. You can see north plumb into heaven from my ranch where it joins the Reserve. I've got a corral right on that north line. Not exactly a corral. A big field full of wild hay. Prettiest red lilies grow there of any place in the United States."

"Is there any trail near this pasture of yours?" asked the colonel.

"Yes, an old one. Used by the Mormons in the old days. Leads across my ranch, south, up across the Gray Bull range into Utah."

"Is it still in such shape that any one could move horses over it rapidly?"

"An expert could."

"Well, Mr. Folsom, you put your tired horses up there. You say they were light?"

Folsom nodded his shaggy head. "The Devonsher Arabian strain. It runs tall and light. But, my God, them horses are lion-hearted! What they lack in weight, they make up in nerve."

"I see. Go on with the story, Mr. Folsom."

THE rancher turned back to the jury. "You know how it is when you've finished spring plowing. You feel as if—oh, well, us free-range folks never was meant to plow, anyhow. When you've grazed your stock over a thousand miles of unfenced wild grass, it sure does make your gorge rise to plow for a hundred or so acres of alfalfa."

Old Mrs. Sherman looked up from her knitting. "It does," she agreed shrilly.

"Silence, madam!" said Judge Jones.

"Go 'long, Willy Jones," returned Mrs. Sherman grimly. "I'll speak when I wish. I've known you forty years—remember that."

Folsom went on with haste. "I felt this year when I took those horses up to the woods corral as if I couldn't ever go back to the house and sleep in four walls again. So I rolled me up in a blanket, watched the moon rise among the spruce trees and went to sleep. My dog, he curled up against my back. About midnight, he woke me up barking. I got up and looked around but I didn't see anything wrong, so I went to sleep again. But in the morning, I found the three Devonsher horses gone."

"Were there other horses in the pasture?"

"Yes, a dozen, some of 'em good horses, too. I saddled up and tried to follow trail. But I had no luck at all except that five miles south up along the Mormon trail, I found that little piece of green flannel I showed you."

"This will be placed among the exhibits," explained Colonel Johnson, to Judge Jones, holding up a diminutive bit of fabric. He returned to the rancher. "What was the date of this theft, Mr. Folsom?"

"It was three days before Sid brought Eve in."

"Had these horses by any chance been looked at by Major Colbaith?"

"Yes, but I wouldn't sell."

"Why not?"

Folsom hesitated and involuntarily looked at Eve. She returned his gaze with a glint of amusement and contempt. The rancher stiffened. "Major Colbaith wouldn't come up to my price. Eve Devonsher wouldn't let him."

Colonel Johnson turned to Jim Poindexter. "You may have the witness, sir."

Eve's attorney looked at the rancher speculatively. "You think a good deal of that ranch of yours, don't you, Mr. Folsom?"

"It's the prettiest ranch in the world, Jim."

Poindexter nodded. "At the same time you are the son of Oregon Trail folks and even the prettiest ranch in the world can't keep you in four walls regularly."

"Just what I said a while back! Every so often, I have to sleep out. It's trail fever. It makes us Oregon Trail folks different from everybody else in the world. I'll bet I average half the nights out in warm weather."

"I know exactly how you feel. So does the jury. And you like to sleep up on the edge of the Reserve where you look north across the world into heaven."

"You bet!"

"Mr. Folsom, according to what Henry Worth told us, Eve Devonsher took the Mormon trail into the Utah country, in May. Now, you slept out most of May, didn't you? You had some mares foaling and that was the reason you gave your wife. Did you see Eve Devonsher when she went up that trail with her pack outfit in May?"

Folsom glared at Jim Poindexter like an angered Newfoundland dog. There was a long pause; then he said, "Yes, I did."

"Why didn't you tell of it?"

"No particular reason to tell, until she was arrested. I'd always been pretty fond of her, though she made me sore sticking up for the British. If she wanted to go to France by the way of Utah, that was her business. And I'd have kept off of the trains as long as I could myself, just like her. After I found the piece of cloth, I wasn't going to talk to no one but a lawyer."

"I see. But, Mr. Folsom, if Eve Devonsher went up that trail early in May wearing a green blouse, couldn't that bit of green flannel have clung to a bush till you found it in June?"

"Yes, but she took those horses," said Folsom, doggedly. "It was the same kind of a trick her father put over, years ago. Every horse stolen was of his strain."

"And yet you have no evidence as to her doing it save the piece of flannel?"

"No, I haven't. But I know she did."

"What in the world would she take them for? She has no debts and she has a good salary as teacher in the high school besides the nice income Mrs. Devonsher makes from the tavern."

"She wanted 'em for Major Colbaith, of course. If he hadn't turned up here that time of the inquest, I'd have said he was in cahoots with her."

Eve turned to Peter, consternation in every line of her face. He lifted his eyebrows but otherwise his face was immobile.

"But a man on Major Colbaith's large mission, Mr. Folsom, would scarcely find it profitable to go in with a woman on an—er—escapade of that sort, would he?"

FOLSOM'S blue eyes fastened on Peter. "You never can tell about these Britishers," he replied. "Strikes me that it's not a bit more unlikely that the grandson of Sir John Colbaith would mix in a horse-running scheme than that he'd be buying army horses at all. That ain't a job for an officer of high rank."

"Just what do you mean by that? Are you sure that your suspicions have any basis except your general dislike of the Devonshers?"

Folsom looked at Jim Poindexter in astonishment. "I don't have any general dislike of the Devonshers! Why, Dave Devonsher and I were buddies! Rode range together. He was a sad, silent sort of a boy and I was a light-hearted fool, so we hit it off well. Dave went to pieces the end of his life, but up to then he was a white man. He was like his father. Couldn't stand punishment—or hard luck—or whatever you call it. Why, I remember one winter he and I trapped beaver together. We was about fifteen. We stored the pelts in the old cabin that used to stand beside Antelope Springs. Prettiest spot in the world, even in winter. Spruce trees all round and the cabin roof packed solid with big shining brown cones. Sound of water under ice all the time. Well, we about filled that cabin to the roof with pelts. Come spring, we were going partners on buying a good stallion we knew about and then we were going to pay up the mortgage on Dave's ranch on Battle Mountain and start a stock ranch. It was Dave's only real prospect of money to save the place.

"One day in early spring we went up to begin moving the pelts and, by the Lord, a pack of timber wolves had got in and destroyed the whole cache. It had been a starving winter for all brutes. Why, it looked like it had snowed pieces of beaver hide for a quarter of a mile round Antelope Spring. Well, you know, Dave nearly went crazy! He wasn't equipped for a trip but he started out then and there to kill all the timber wolves in creation. He didn't come home for three weeks and when he got back he was as despondent as a man after his first girl has turned him down. They foreclosed on the mortgage that spring—poor Dave."

Folsom paused and there was silence in the courtroom as if every mind there was picturing to itself that early boyhood grief. Eve saw the many motionless heads through a mist of tears. Her father never had told her of this episode. She wondered if her mother had known of it. But Mary's wan face gave no sign. She had reached the limit of suffering with Eve's trouble.

"I haven't got any grudge against the Devonshers. Except the kind of grudge you always feel against people who don't live up to your expectations. Of course, Eve's nothing but a woman. But at the same time she's got to learn that even a woman can't get away with what she's tried to do."

Colonel Johnson heaved an audible sigh of relief as Jim Poindexter signified that he was through with the witness. Folsom rolled out of the room like the brown bear he was supposed to resemble and Doc Peabody was called to the stand. The little doctor obviously was a reluctant witness. He looked tired and his voice was tense. He told the story of his share in the after events of the murder in as few words as possible, then closed his mouth with a snap.

"You have known the prisoner for a long time, have you not, doctor?" asked the colonel pleasantly.

"Since she was born," replied Doc Peabody. He gave his old friend Judge Jones a defiant glance. "I don't know what constitutes contempt of court with your Honor. From what has occurred in this trial I'd say your notions were liberal! However, I'm going farther than some of the other witnesses and refuse to give any evidence that I think might incriminate the prisoner."

"Why?" asked the judge laconically.

"Because I'd as soon see my own daughter as Eve Devonsher in the fix she's in. If she did shoot Angus Duncan, it was an accident and nobody knows that better than you, judge!"

"Thanks, Doc!" The judge's voice was dry. He turned to Colonel Johnson. "Colonel, have you still courage to ask the witness the questions you undoubtedly have in mind?"

"I have only one or two points I want the doctor to clear up. I think he'll be willing to do so," returned the attorney for the state. "Dr. Peabody, did you tell Eve Devonsher that her mother had sold the Princess horse to Angus Duncan?"

"I did not. I supposed Eve to be on her way to France when I learned what her mother had done."

"Did you send a letter to Major Colbaith asking him to buy the Princess horse from Angus Duncan?"

"Yes, I did."

"Why did you do that, doctor?"

Under his gray beard the little doctor's jaw was rigid. "I shall have to refuse to answer that question, colonel."

"Wasn't it because you knew that if Eve had not actually started for France, she would come back and make trouble, and that if by the time she heard of the matter Major Colbaith had the horse, there was a chance that nothing would happen."

Doc Peabody shrugged his shoulders.

"Didn't you know," insisted Colonel Johnson, "that there was bad blood between the Devonshers and the Duncans, and didn't you fear the result?"

"If you are referring to the alleged revelations made by Henry Worth, my answer is 'No.' Henry's statements all were news to me."

"Have you reason to believe Henry Worth is not an honest man?"

"He never was dishonest with me."

"Do you believe that Henry Worth is cousin to Eve Devonsher?"

"I know he's not."

"How do you know that, doctor?"

"My father was a physician brought over here by Sir John Colbaith to study the diseases of the Indians. He probably was the only man of the principals concerned who knew who was the father of John Worth. He gave me the facts of the case. I don't see how they can help Eve any and I haven't any intention of divulging them."

"DID your father ever talk to you, doctor, about Carter Devonsher's losing Oregon Territory for England?"

"Why not say, gaining Oregon Territory for America?" asked Doc Peabody, sharply.

"Because he was an Englishman, in the employ of an English house and the trusted representative of Great Britain in this country at the time Oregon went to America. He remained a British subject till his death."

"No, he did not remain so," contradicted Doc Peabody. "He became a man without a country. England exiled him for what he'd done. He would not become an American. His was the most tragic figure the West has known. We are a heedless people. Even those who knew something of the matter at the time forgot it, as soon as Oregon was safely ours. But the shadow of England's curse has never lifted from the Devonshers. It's hovering over Eve Devonsher now. I for one refuse to add anything whatever to its heaviness."

PETER drew a quick breath. Truly the impalpable could become a force overwhelming, immeasurable, in its ramifications and consequences.

Colonel Johnson turned politely to Eve's lawyer. "Will you take the witness, sir?"

Jim Poindexter shook his great white head, half whimsically. "I like the doctor, but I'm not sure I want him! However, just to relieve you, colonel—" He turned to Doc Peabody. "Doctor, were you conscious of any particular hostility between Angus Duncan and Eve Devonsher?"

"Eve is not a person who gives her confidence to people in general. At least she gave very little of it to me."

"That doesn't answer my question, doctor."

"I know Eve disliked Angus's way of treating live stock and I knew Angus had been very keen about Eve up to the time he married Minnie Brownell. How much Minnie had been able to make him turn against Eve, I don't know."

"But you knew of nothing that would provoke murder on the part of either?"

The doctor chose his words carefully. "Not on Eve's part, certainly. She is a person of large nature. Her record as a teacher shows that from a passionate, ill-controlled childhood she emerged into a forceful but well-managed womanhood. She was a good disciplinarian and the boys particularly were very fond of her. She had less patience with the girls."

"And do you think that this self-control would have withstood the strain of knowing what happened to the Princess horse in Angus Duncan's hands?"

Doc Peabody nodded. "Yes, I do, because I've seen her keep her head under a greater strain."

"Your Honor," interrupted Colonel Johnson dryly, "I was under the impression that this was a witness for the prosecution."

"We are looking for truth," returned the judge, impatiently. "Go on, doctor!"

"It was this spring, early, when she was riding round with Major Colbaith. It was obvious to every one that Eve had an overwhelming desire that Antelope Basin do the generous or at least the decent thing by England in this horse matter. To me it was a perfectly understandable attitude on her part, and a most praiseworthy one. The epidemic of influenza this spring brought me into practically every ranch house in the Basin country. So I could observe pretty closely the reaction to Eve and the major's activities. Curious! Sometimes, by Jove, I think humanity is mostly made up of bellyache and graft."

Somebody guffawed and the doctor turned an indignant face in the direction of the sound, nor did he continue his story until the room was absolutely silent.

"Minnie Duncan didn't tell all that occurred when Angus and Eve quarreled over the piece of horseflesh. The quarrel took place in the aspen grove near the corral. I had been out on a baby case and had been without sleep for forty-eight hours. As I often do, I slept in the saddle and as my way home lay past Duncan's ranch, the horse naturally stopped by for a visit. When I woke up he was standing with his head over Duncan's corral fence, reaching for a wisp of hay on the ground and there was the sound of voices in the trees on the opposite side.

"I heard Minnie say: 'You may think you can make Angus trouble, but you wait and see what I'm going to do to you. I'm going to run you out of this valley, you horse thief's daughter. You think you can make love to an Englishman now that don't know your history, and throw down a decent American like Howard Freeman. I'll see to it that that stupid fool Englishman knows all about you.'

"Then I heard Eve say: 'Minnie! Minnie! Minnie!' There was heartbreak in her voice, and she whirled past the corral at a gallop. She did not see me. I followed after her but I never overtook her. There are twists to the story of this murder that no one ever will know. Among other things no one ever will know what Eve Devonsher has endured from Minnie Duncan's tongue."

Minnie Duncan, sitting beside her mother, half rose as if to speak, but her mother jerked her back and put her hand over Minnie's mouth.

"My own feeling"—Doc Peabody now

addressed the jury—"about this case is no matter who killed Angus Duncan, he got his deserts. He was a bully and a blackmailer. I think Judge Jones is doing neither the Devonshers nor this valley a favor in forcing this kind of a trial through."

He took his seat and Jim Poindexter grinned affably at the prosecuting attorney. "If you have any more witnesses like this, colonel, I shall be delighted to cross-examine them."

COLONEL JOHNSON sniffed and called Mr. Tom Maine to the witness stand. The old trapper walked to his place as lightly as a boy. He was dressed for an occasion: spurred boots, blue overalls, and a buckskin coat beaded and fringed by some long dead squaw. He wore his white beard tied in a knot on his breast and his hair lay like frost on the blue-beaded collar of his coat. His keen old eyes swept the room and he nodded affably to Judge Jones. Colonel Johnson, head slightly cocked like a showman appraising an interesting exhibit he is about to present to the public, smiled in a pleased manner and said:

"Mr. Maine, I have called you to testify in regard to the visit Eve Devonsher paid you a short time ago. You have known the prisoner for some time? Talk to the jury, please."

"Went for the doctor for her ma when she was born! You see"—the trapper's words flooded forth as if a tap had turned on all the speech denied him in the years of his hermitage in the Wind River country—"you see I was a trapper from the time I was born. I am ninety-six years old and my memory goes back clear to the days when Sir John Colbaith and Carter Devonsher was having their fight. I was about fifteen when Governor Colbaith made me his guide."

"Don't forget we want to hear about Miss Devonsher's visit to you."

"I ain't forgetting that for a minute. I'm worried sick about it. But there's other things got to be told first. Big things that made the killing of that Duncan stinker look like nothing at all. For years and years I knowed I ought to tell what I know but I didn't know just how to go about it. Now, by heck, I know! And I've put on my ice-cream clothes and come here to tell it. It might seem to some like a court of justice ain't the place for a scattering line of talk like what's been put out here, and like what I'm going to put out. I've read reports of trials back East where a witness can't say anything besides yes and no but what the lawyer had told him to say beforehand. Is that real justice? Ain't real justice found only when everything that's in men's minds about a case is laid out before twelve common-sense folks and they pick the truth as they agree on it? That's justice. Now then, ladies and gents on the jury, Eve Devonsher came up to see me."

He paused, took a deliberate bite from a new plug of tobacco, located a cuspidor with a sweeping glance of the eye and returned to the jury.

"I hadn't seen her since she came up to my place with her pa, years before, on a bear hunt. At least, bear hunting was part of it. Dave really wanted to talk to me. Seemed that Rob Duncan, Angus's father, was blackmailing him out of the last end of what little Devonsher property there was and Dave wanted to see if I had any information that would shut Rob up. Rob had been able to get a rise out of old Carter regularly over the tangle about the birthing of John Worth."

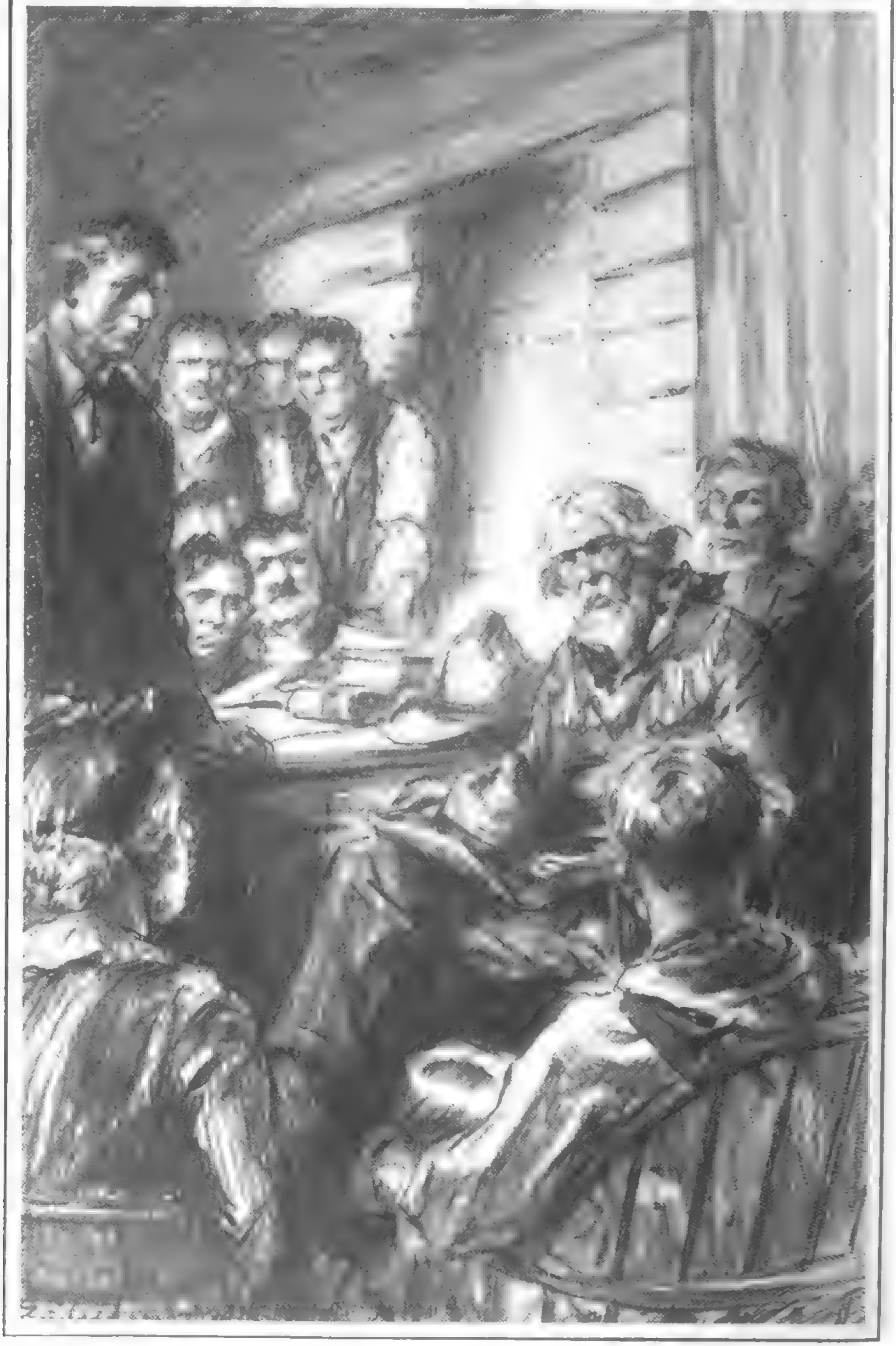
"What was that tangle, Mr. Maine?" asked Colonel Johnson.

No old steel trap of his hunting days closed tighter than did Tom Maine's lips at this query.

"That ain't got anything to do with my story," he replied. "And if you keep interrupting me with fool questions, you're going to have me all mixed up. I planned what I wanted to say, careful. If you want me to say it my own way, all right. Otherwise, I'm a-going back to the Wind River country."

"I beg your pardon, sir! Proceed!" exclaimed Colonel Johnson. He cocked an amused eye at Judge Jones.

"The real thing that Rob was using, however, was his inside knowledge of the old deal between Sir John Colbaith and Carter Devonsher. Carter had done a good job for the Hudson's Bay Company. He'd kept settlers out of the Oregon country. He'd made the Injuns work and he'd kept communications between the north Pacific coast and the United States so all-fired dangerous that it was quicker to send a letter from Boston to Vancouver by way of Cape Horn and the Hawaiian Islands than



"Now, ladies and gents," said the old man, "she said she didn't shoot him. But after the story I've just told you, how could she help shooting him?"

it was overland. It only took a year to come round the Horn.

"Yes, ladies and gents, Carter Devonsher done all the dirty work as well as the good work for the Hudson's Bay Company in a first-class manner. He sure was greater than a king in this part of the world. I was born at Fort Jason and, by heck, I was prouder of it than them old Romans was that they was born in Rome! Because Fort Jason was Carter Devonsher's headquarters.

"He was a man! Tall, red-headed, eyes like an eagle's. Could hold more whisky than any man in Oregon country and never show it. Had a terrible temper but would give his shirt to you afterward. Lived like a lord at Fort Jason. Eighteen or twenty servants. All the comforts that he'd have got to home in England in a castle. Looked like him and every one connected with him was fixed for life.

"Then one day an Injun runner brought in a letter from Vancouver. I was cleaning guns in the big living-room of the fort. You could put this whole courthouse in one corner of it. The factor, as we called Carter Devonsher in those days, was laying the law down to his secretary, Hugh Duncan, about something when the Sioux brought the letter in. The factor ripped it open, read it and let out a roar you could hear from here to Wind River country.

" 'They've appointed a blasted governor to come over here and run this business. Damned if I'll stand it!'

"He walked up and down the floor like a bull buffalo. He was fifty or more but his hair was as red as Eve's is this minute. The Injun stood looking at him with his jaw dropped. 'Here, you Black Feather!' yells Carter. 'How far are you ahead of the English party?'"

" 'Maybe one week,' answers the Sioux.

"Meantime Hugh Duncan had read the letter. "It's Sir John Colbaith,' he says, in a voice like he was speaking of a king.

" 'So much the worse,' shouts the factor. 'This ends it.' And he slams out of the room.

"THE next day he takes me and we ride down into the Antelope Basin country and while Carter never spoke a hundred words on the trip, I knew he was planning that the hundred thousand acres hereabouts was to be his. We was gone nearly a week, and the day after we reached Fort Jason, Sir John Colbaith comes in, with a big enough pack train to have took him clean on to St. Louis. Funny, the English can't take a simple trip without enough help to move a circus.

"Carter, he was polite enough. But I noted that he didn't say, 'Light, stranger, and look to your saddle.' Sir John wasn't even allowed to hobble his horse, like, and throw his saddle on the ground near our camp-fire—if you get what I mean. Everybody in the fort and for miles around knew a deadly war was on between these two Englishmen. But nobody but me and Hugh Duncan and Jackson Brownell knew how big the stakes was."

The old trapper had been speaking with extraordinary rapidity and he was forced to pause for breath. He sat with legs crossed, chewing thoughtfully, his eyes on the jury. Outside the window the late morning sun drenched the Plaza war gardens and children's voices, screaming with laughter, pierced through the chatter of magpies in the cottonwoods. Peter and Eve, gaze focused on the witness, knew that except those of old Tom Maine, all the eyes in the courtroom were fastened on them.

Old Maine told his story extremely well. For the first time since her arrest, Eve's sense of her own danger was eclipsed by another fear; fear lest the last thread of her respect for her grandfather be broken by that garrulous old Nemesis in the witness chair. If this happened, she knew that, having long been an outcast in her mind, she would become one in her soul as well, and then her desire to live would cease.

"Sir John," Maine began again, "was a long, quiet-spoken chap like his grandson over there." Peter was favored by a stare from the witness, who added as if in a confidential aside: "I can't help laughing when I think these folks round here has swallowed the idea that a grandson of old Sir John Colbaith would come over here just to buy horses! However, that's not my business.

"Carter give Sir John to understand that the fort couldn't feed his big outfit forever. Sir John showed him he wasn't afraid of Carter Devonsher and all his gang by sending every man jack he'd brought with him back to Vancouver except his bodyservant, and he took me on as a guide. Lord, those was days! Sir John, he was going to see the whole of that country himself. And he saw it because I showed it to him. He wouldn't say much, but once in a while when we'd reach the top of a range and the whole Oregon country lay under us he'd say sort of between his teeth, 'This shall be England, too.'

"By the time he'd been here six months, Sir John had visited every fort and had sent for his secretary to come down from Vancouver. Then he settled down in his room to writing a report to the Hudson's Bay Company and the British government. I know that"—in response to raised eyebrows on the part of Colonel Johnson—"because whenever I was cleaning guns in his room alone, I seed as much of the report as I could spell out. I didn't understand much. But I noticed he didn't say much about Carter Devonsher. It was like as if the factor of Fort Jason, that had been the whole works in the Oregon country, had died! It was all about the wonderful possibilities of the territory and about keeping quiet about it and playing up to the ignorance of the United States about it.

"Everybody was betting about when the storm would break and most of the bets were in Carter's favor. But me, I had guided both the men. And I believed that the terrible patient waiter like Sir John was sure to win in a fight like this against the high-tempered, nervous man like the factor. Well, one day Sir John, he invited the factor to go on an inspection trip with him up to East Pass, where Sir John wanted a fort built. I went along and the two body-servants, Jackson Brownell and Herman Metz and Hughie Duncan. We made our camp on the top of East Pass, and it was there the storm broke.

"The two Englishmen were sitting beside the camp-fire after supper and the rest of us was eating off to one side. Sir John says, very quietly: 'The building of the fort must begin at once. I would like to see your plans within a week after we return to Fort Jason.'

"Carter Devonsher looked across the fire at Sir John like he could eat him! 'I'm not accustomed to take orders in this country, Sir John, from any one but my Maker.'

" 'Sorry,' says Sir John, 'but the world outside has been moving on and you've not been able to keep pace with it. That's my work—to connect you with the progress of events.'

" 'Sir John,' roars Carter, 'this Oregon territory is two hundred and fifty thousand square miles in extent, but it's not big enough to hold both you and me!'

" 'So sorry,' says Sir John. 'You'll find England a bit stupid after this wild life.'

" 'You are deceiving yourself,' shouts Carter. 'There'll never be but one British governor of Oregon while I live, and that will be Carter Devonsher. If I can't be the head of this territory, you shan't be!'

"Sir John rose up from his seat, slow-like, and it seems as if he was ten feet tall when he finished unfolding.

" 'Devonsher'—he spoke awful quiet but at the same time his voice was about as peaceful as the drone of a hornet—'Devonsher,' he says, 'make your plans for returning to England at once. I have been very patient. I've waited six months for you to make up your mind to coöperate with me. Now it's too late.'

" 'You can bet it's too late!' Carter is standing up, too. He's handsomer than Sir John but somehow in spite of the noise he made I felt as if he didn't have the governor's staying-power. 'You bet it's too late,' says Carter. 'You're a foreigner here. But I've been here twenty-five years and the territory is mine to do what I wish with. And if England or you or the Hudson's Bay Company fall afoul of me, you'll lose the territory!'

" 'Absurd!' grunts Sir John.

" 'Don't you know that you can't keep this territory a secret?' Carter shook his fist at Sir John. 'Don't you know that as soon as the United States learns that it's richer than the dreams of man, she'll drive the Hudson's Bay Company and England out of here?' "

" 'Certainly I know it,' answers Sir John. 'But the American Congress won't know what is in this territory till the treaty with England is completed, giving it to us.'

"CARTER DEVONSHER just stared at the other Englishman. Then he sort of licks his lips and says more quiet than he's spoken before: 'I tell you, you don't realize my power here. I'm parliament, the ministry and the king. I love this territory and the way I live here better than I do my life. I'll never see another man put over my head. You go home and leave me to keep this territory for England.'

" 'Mr. Devonsher, you'll either leave or remain at Fort Jason a prisoner!'

"And by the Lord, he meant it!"

The old trapper gasped the last sentence forth as though the enormity of that lese-majesty still appalled him. He leaned forward toward the jury.

"He meant it! When we got back to Fort Jason there was a squad of redcoats there from Vancouver and they arrested Carter Devonsher and locked him in a cell! There was a lot of wild talk for a while about rescuing but nobody had any real hanker to test out just how much power Sir John Colbaith had. Before we broke camp at East Pass he lined us up, me and Hughie Duncan and Jackson Brownell and Herman and told us if we ever repeated what we heard that night at camp, he'd have us shot as spies. And if you wanted any more proof of what we thought of that there quiet-spoken Englishman than what I've already said, I'll just clinch it by saying that not one of three Americans ever did repeat it—though Hughie Duncan used it as blackmail on Carter as long as they both lived. Herman died of dysentery shortly after, so he don't count.

"Well, Carter stayed in the cell where he'd shut up so many of the folks that didn't bend quick enough to his will, for a week, and then, one day, he's gone. Sir John Colbaith takes over the territory as natural as though he'd been there twenty-five years himself and goes on with Carter's old fight to keep Americans out. Carter was supposed to be down here on his Antelope Basin claim. But he wasn't here. He went to California and saw Fremont. Shortly after that, hell broke lose in Congress and one day again an Injun runner comes in from Vancouver. Sir John Colbaith, he reads a document as long as the Old Testament; then he sends for me and says, very quiet:

" 'Tom, how soon could you outfit for you and me to go on a trip to Antelope Basin?'

" 'I can be ready tomorrow morning,' says I.

"And I was. And he and I hit the trailless way down here from Fort Jason. By the Lord, he was a man, Sir John Colbaith! What do you think he wanted? Well, ladies and gents, he wanted to fight a duel with Carter Devonsher! And they fought it, them two bucks, both of 'em fifty, both of 'em Oxford men, both of 'em Englishmen, both of 'em full of lust for power.

"They fit with swords brought along by Sir John right up there on the flank of Gray Bull Mountain, this side of the cedar grove, about the spot where Angus Duncan's grave is. We laid their coats on that big brown rock. Elias Worth and his half-breed family and Jackson Brownell and Hughie Duncan had settled in here with Carter Devonsher. And Hughie and I acted as seconds.

"That was a fight! Never saw anything like it, though since, I've read of the same thing in books. It was quicker and quieter and prettier than a prize fight. Looked like they was even material, slash for slash. Looked like neither could win and like they'd been fighting all eternity when all of a sudden Carter Devonsher's red head was banging the ground and Sir John was holding him there with his sword through Carter's right arm.

"Sir John was panting and his cheek was cut and his shirt was bloody, but his voice was the same low drawl.

" 'YOU are to write a full confession of your traitorship for me to take back to England with me,' says he.

"Carter Devonsher lay on his back staring at the sky. It must have been five minutes that he never said a word. Then he says between his teeth, 'I told you you'd never rule in my place.'

" 'And you pay for it by being no longer an Englishman,' says Sir John.

" 'It's worth it,' snarls Carter.

" 'Is it?' asks Sir John, just like that. 'Is it?'

"Carter Devonsher answers never a word. He just stares at Sir John and if any one ever saw fear and horror and regret in any pair of eyes, it was there under that bloody red hair.

"Well, Carter produced a document that appeared to satisfy Sir John and that afternoon we started back for Fort Jason. When we made camp that night Sir John says to me, quiet-like, that he'll be leaving for England shortly; that Oregon is now an American territory and that he'd be glad if I'd give him my word as a friend never to repeat what I'd seen as long as he or Devonsher lived. And I gave him my word and kept it."

The old man heaved a great sigh and with fingers trembling from the strain of his story-telling, lifted the plug of tobacco for another bite. In his excitement he had long since swallowed the first.

"Now," he said, "I'm telling you, ladies and gents, all this so you'll understand how I felt when Carter Devonsher's only granddaughter comes a-riding into my corral telling me she's broke jail and is running away because she's accused of shooting Hughie Duncan's grandson. She said she didn't shoot him. But after the story I've just told you, how could she help shooting him? Wasn't it fate or whatever you call it, working out? Ain't history just an endless circle, anyhow?

"But that ain't all. I told Eve to sleep in my alfalfa stack that one night she was with me so she could make a clean get-away in case she had to. Toward morning the dogs set up a great barking and I took a prowl around to see if she was all right. Everything was O. K. but Eve was setting up there on the haystack talking in her sleep like a lunatic.

" 'There's blood on my hands,' she yells. 'Blood on my hands!' Then she cries a little. Then she says: 'His father tortured my father and his grandfather tortured my grandfather. It's got to stop with him and me.' Then she cries some more and groans that there's blood on her hands. I stayed by the stack till she'd quieted down. Then I went back to the cabin and started the fire and spent the rest of the night wondering at the ways of Providence. In the morning when she came in and told me she was going back to take her medicine, I nearly dropped dead. That wasn't the Devonsher way. After she was gone I made up my mind that maybe she'd find the way to lift the punishment on the Devonsher family. And I come down here to clear ground for her by telling the truth. I guess that's all I've got to say, colonel."

There was a certain solemnity in Colonel Johnson's manner as he turned to Jim Poindexter. "Will you cross-examine the witness, sir?"

"MR. MAINE," asked Jim, "do you consider the statements made in sleep by an exhausted and tortured mind as worth serious consideration? Would you hang a person for them?"

"Depends on circumstances. That's why I took an hour this morning to tell the circumstances."

"You dislike the Devonsher family, then, Mr. Maine!"

"Dislike 'em! Ain't I just ruined my voice trying to prove to you how much I think of 'em?"

"I see. And it's because you like them so much that you feel Eve has not been sufficiently punished for the acts of her grandfather. But Carter Devonsher gave, according to your testimony, this vast territory to his country—"

" 'Twasn't his country," interrupted the old man. "He never became a citizen. He was willing to rob his own country as vengeance because his personal ambitions had been thwarted. He was a traitor."

"And yet you liked him?"

"You couldn't help liking him. He was a great man. So should Dave have been. They've all suffered enough. The cross should be lifted now. Let Eve go take her punishment for this killing and things will be right for the Devonshers again."

"Right from what point of view?" demanded Jim, skeptically. "From that of England, or of the Duncans or the Worths? You ought to be a good enough American to see that there is nothing to this 'big family' tradition. Great men almost never have great sons. It's absurd to demand great service from Dave or Eve because of Carter's capacity. Nothing Eve can do or endure can undo her grandfather's acts. She owes nothing to any one save her mother and herself. It's rank outrage for you to come down here and put her on trial with the jury for what Carter Devonsher did. Your Honor"—turning to Judge Jones—"I protest most vehemently against the sort of testimony you are allowing here."

Several members of the jury, old Mrs. Sherman among them, nodded in agreement. Seeing which, Jim was not seriously snubbed by the judge's retort:

"I reserve the privilege of determining the value of the testimony, sir."

Jim shrugged his shoulders and turned away. A moment later Peter was called to the witness chair.

The Devonsher case contains dynamite for Antelope Basin from first to last; the next explosions are from Major Colbaith and Lee Fu. See July EVERYBODY'S, out June 14.

Miss Cora Greene

Pluck and Romance Unite to Save a Girl to Whom Life Might Well Have Seemed Hopeless

By Walton Hall Smith

AT EACH side of the little gravel path walked a uniformed matron, a stalwart woman with the face of a seasoned prize-fighter; in the center of the path walked a slender girl, with the face of an angel. This was Miss Cora Greene.

Cora had a really remarkable face. It was small and oval, and its features were a composite of many magazine covers. Its frame of hair was bobbed, tumultuous, and fiery red. But not for these distinctions could it be called remarkable. The crowning characteristic of Cora's face was its lack of betrayal. It told nothing whatever about her.

Cora had run away from home at sixteen and married the wayward scion of an old family—a delectable match for Cora, except that her husband beat her with regularity; she had supported him with a clerk's salary for two years, and the night her baby was born he was at a dance with another girl. He was slain by a policeman's bullet two weeks later—but in Cora's remarkable face there was not a single line or wrinkle. The chin was negative, the mouth was negative; there was not a vestige of character development in the delicate nose or milk-white forehead. It was "pretty-pretty," and, as every one said, the mind behind such a face could have no idea of privation, sorrow or hardship.

Cora had, however, beautiful bright brown wide-set eyes, which almost always reflected an expression of perfect vacuity. *Almost* always. It was in the rare moments when they reflected something different that a hint was given of the traits which endlessly astonished those around her. These hidden qualities were grit, doggedness, fearlessness, intelligence and imagination.

Cora would have come out all right if they had let her alone. But when she lost her health and her job and they took her baby to an orphanage and took her to the women's bridewell in Lansing because she was called Miss instead of Mrs.—they started something. Now, on her evening walks, she had the companionship of the two most efficient matrons, and when the breeze toppled her turgid red hair into her eyes she had to use both hands to brush it back, because her wrists were manacled.

On two occasions she had made a break for liberty, you understand, and the second time she nearly got it. Both times the length of her sentence had been doubled. If she should try it a third time and be captured, her sentence would increase by geometric progression to eight years, and that would make her thirty-two when she was released; but Cora didn't think of that. Many things were infinitely more important at the moment.

For example: the moon was but a sickle tonight and made practically no light. Also the clouds were coming up out of the west. They would hide the stars; there would soon be no light at all. Cora was allowed each day three trips around the grounds by the little gravel path in the shadow of the high wall. At one point this path led into a patch of sickly shrubbery, and just back of the shrubbery was a steel gate. Through this gate the grounds man came every night at eight with a barrow-load of rakes and hoes and shovels. He always opened the gate first, returned for his barrow, wheeled it through, then went back and locked the gate again. He was an old man, very methodical and very slow.

Cora had watched the procedure on several occasions when it chanced that she was passing with her two attendants. On the first occasion she had been struck with an idea, and on all the subsequent ones she studied the possibilities. If she should just happen to pass on a night when the weather was bad; if . . .

OUTSIDE the gate there was a road with woods on each side which led to the town of Lansing in one direction, and to the Missouri River in the other. Cora had been born near the river. She knew that its banks were pock-marked with quicksand sloughs, that it was full of cavernous whirlpools, and that sharp, treacherous snags projected upward from its black bed, but she knew also that it flowed toward Kansas City, and that somewhere in Kansas City was her baby.

Cora glanced over the top of the wall to the west and observed the dying light carefully, and then little by little slackened her pace. They were now in the middle of the second trip, and the next round must be made more slowly or else they would be several minutes ahead of the grounds man. One of the matrons looked around irritably.

"Come on," she said; "don't lag back. We aren't going to walk all night, you know."

"No kidding?" said Cora.

When they passed the gate a second time her head was carelessly averted. It was now nearly dark and the heavy clouds were banking high in the heavens. In another half-hour there would be no moon. Cora stretched her arms above her tousled head and yawned. Then she began to whistle.

Slowly they passed the main buildings and slowly moved down the path toward the shrubbery again. Cora sang softly, "That redhead gal—she's got me worried—that redhead gal—"

"Sh-h-h-h!" ordered the matron. "You're not working in a cabaret any more."

"I'll say I ain't," said Cora, and went on singing.

Just outside the patch of shrubbery Cora deliberately slipped and fell, and a minute later when she very leisurely drew herself to her feet there was a small scraping sound at the gate. The trio moved on. Though looking straight ahead Cora saw that the gate was open and that the grounds man had stepped back for his barrow. By the time they were abreast of the gate he would be coming through and the way to freedom would be barred.

Cora halted. "Let's go back; I've had enough," she said.

"You come on," snapped one of the matrons. "You wanted this walk; now you'll take it."

"All right, dearie. Don't get mad," answered Cora, and she very slowly advanced.

Just before they arrived at the gate the grounds man came through, with a pleasant good evening on his lips, and his barrow in his hands.

The events of the next ten seconds were many, and they came altogether too fast for the matrons. In telling it later one of them claimed the distinction of having screamed a warning, but no one had heard it. Since it was rendered from a sitting position in the midst of a thorny bush it was decided the heavy shrubbery must have muffled it. The other sustained a badly cut cheek acquired from an intimacy with a handcuff. As for the grounds man, he explained to the warden that a red comet had passed close by, and that was all. Simply, it was up to the institution officially to beat the neighboring woods until it recovered unto itself Miss Cora Greene.

TWO hours before dawn the weather was maudlin. Spasmodic sheets of rain hissed into the black river and the sticky clay banks were like toboggan slides. At the edge of the wood Cora allowed her drenched body to sink to the warm wet earth, and with rapid fingers removed her shoes and stockings. Calculatingly, she carried these to the edge of the bank and placed them in an obvious pile. Then, burying her bare feet deep in the mud with each step, she made a clear track to the hurrying water and waded out thigh-deep.

For perhaps thirty minutes she waded downstream, feeling her way carefully with her toes, her shackled hands spread out, groping into the blackness before her. Twice she stepped into deep holes and the filthy water rushed into her ears, nose and mouth, leaving between her teeth a fine, bitter grit. The rain soaked down on her head and shoulders and poured unceasingly from her thick, matted hair. Several times her feet encountered sharp edges buried in the mud and each time she could feel the sudden numb warmth of blood. Once her knee struck viciously against a pointed snag and a sob of pain slipped from her parted lips. She went on.

At length she arrived at an impasse. A ponderous log with branches extending from each side like outriggers protruded from the bank, and the outward end lay in water considerably over her depth. To climb on the bank and go around meant to leave tracks. Cora grasped one of the branches and tugged. The log moved. She tugged again, harder, and it seemed to slip a little toward her. Apparently it was not altogether fast to the bank.

Cora braced her feet in the muck and set to work in earnest, twisting the mass back and forth in a little greater arc each time. Finally she struggled through the branches and out onto the central trunk. At the very end she brought the weight of her body down sharply several times, until the end of the log slipped from the bank with a sluggish splash. For a moment it swayed this way and that uncertainly, and then the current swung it, trunk-forward, downstream. Cora worked back to the center and, sitting astride the log, began to paddle with her feet. The heavy branches lying in the water kept the whole mass upright.

Minutes went by, and Cora's busy feet urged the log past midstream and on toward the other bank. Once it was brought up gently against a sand flat, and fifteen minutes' tortuous labor was required to swing the hulk around the end and into the stream again. At last, however, the opposite bank was reached. Cora slid off the log in mud up to her knees and drew her tired body up the rivuleted slope and into a border of dense woods. Underfoot the ground was perilous with long thorny spines and sharp twigs, but there was no other way. It was either the river or the woods and Cora was weary of the river.

The rain had ended, and when the dawn came, like a reluctant ubiquitous ghost, Cora's throbbing knees collapsed and she lay without moving in the soggy underbrush. Her gray prison dress clung to her aching body in twisted ribands and her little feet were cruelly gashed and gently bleeding in many places. Under their manacles her slender wrists were blue and puffy. From beneath closed eyelids an occasional tear welled up and trickled from her pallid cheek to the soaked grass below.

SOME one was singing: "That redhead gal—she's got me worried—that redhead gal—"

It was a pleasant tenor voice, and soothing in a way, but Cora wished it would stop. And she wished whoever it was would leave her burning wrists alone and stop that scraping sound. She was very tired and hurt.

"That redhead gal—"

Cora opened her eyes and saw the morning sunlight streaming across a little cot on which she was lying, and then spilling down onto the floor and upon the opposite wall of a ramshackle cabin. Seated beside her and filing at the handcuffs was a black-haired, heavily tanned young man with a good voice.

Cora raised her head. "What goes on?" she asked.

"Something important," replied the young man without turning.

"Say, do you know that hurts?"

"Yes. How do your feet feel?"

Cora looked down and discovered that she was swathed in a heavy blanket, and that her feet were skilfully bound up in snowy gauze. When she wriggled her toes they felt sticky. "They don't hurt so bad," she said. "What's that you put on them?"

"It's a sort of a camphor salve. Put your head back, now."

Cora obeyed without knowing exactly why. "Is this your house?"

"Yes; it happens to be a house-boat, however."

"Oh! You live here all the time?"

"All the time I can, which is about a month out of the year."

There was a little silence, and presently the young man rose, taking the severed handcuffs with him. Across the room he opened a large cabinet containing a vast assortment of bottles and containers, and a moment later returned with more gauze, cotton and salve. He proceeded quickly to dress her wrists.

"Say," said Cora, "what do you do the rest of the time?"

"What time?"

"The time you're not on this boat."

Everybody's Magazine, June, 1924

"I practice medicine."

"You must need practice."

The young man continued his work without changing expression. "Don't talk unless you can talk sense," he said, in the tone of one making a casual remark.

"Sa-a-ay—" began Cora; but as no appropriate rejoinder occurred to her she became silent.

"If you are fortunate," continued the young man, "you won't get blood poisoning. Or pneumonia." He completed the dressing with a rectangle of adhesive tape, and replaced the medicine and accessories in the cabinet. At the head of the cot stood a small stove, and from this he brought a cup of steaming coffee. "I'm sorry I have no cream; I drink it black, but there's sugar in it. I'm going out for an hour or two now, and in the meantime you lie quietly where you are. When I come back we'll have dinner."

"Say, what do you think?" said Cora. "I can't stay here."

"Can't you?"

"Of course I can't."

"I'm afraid you'll have to."

"Oh, is that so? Well, what's to prevent me from walking ashore?"

"Not a thing, if you can walk on water."

Cora sat up. "Aren't we against the bank?"

"Against the bank of a sand flat in midstream. I told you to lie quietly."

"You're kinda bossy, aren't you? What's the idea of bringing me out here?"

"Lie down and I'll tell you."

Cora hesitated and then obeyed.

The young man went on. "I brought you out first so that you wouldn't die, and second so that the searching party that passed a few hours ago wouldn't find you."

CORA looked at the ceiling and reflected. "Aren't you gonna turn me in?"

"I don't believe so. There's nothing interesting in that. Probably I shall take you to Kansas City. Now you lie quietly while I'm gone. There's only one condition under which you can get up and that is if you should hear a motor-boat. In that case get up and look out of the window, but keep your head out of sight. If it is a red boat go behind the stove there, open the floor trap and go down into the bilge. That's all."

"Wait a minute," said Cora. "Where are you going?"

"Fishing."

"What's those jugs for, you're taking?"

"That's the way you catch the channel cat, by jugging them. You wouldn't understand, so don't bother about it; I want you to rest."

A moment later Cora heard the squeaking of his rowlocks. When the sound had become very faint she rose and limped painfully to the center of the cabin.

There was, it seemed, but little to explore. Stove, coal scuttle and kindling. In another corner a pile of books halfway to the ceiling, all big, like Bibles and dictionaries. Medicine cabinet bolted to the wall, with the door padlocked. Probably booze in there as well as medicine. An uncomfortable-looking chair. A closed writing desk, not locked. This, Cora decided, would bear investigation, and she forthwith opened the lid.

The desk was quite neat inside, with little piles of letters and papers, a frayed green blotter and several pencils. In the back was a closed leather picture folio with a name in gold-leaf: C. L. Blair, M.D. Cora idly opened it halfway and looked into the clear, kindly eyes of a slender gray-haired lady. Cora's placid forehead furrowed a little and she looked closer. No, she had certainly not seen the lady before, but around the mouth and eyes there was a look she had seen; had known well. An incredulous gleam came into her eyes. "Blair"—the name was plain. But—it wasn't possible! She turned the next page.

For an instant Cora's heart halted; then it struck a solid blow and went on. A noisy breath rushed sharply into her lungs. With nimble fingers the folio and desk were closed; in utter disregard for hurt feet she ran to the cot and lay down. The explorations were over. In the other side of the folio Cora had seen a picture of herself. Shocks, however, had not been altogether unwonted in Cora's life; so their effect was not devastating. After a brief realization that it was unsafe to fall asleep, she promptly did so. The red boat did not appear, however; so it was all right. When she awoke her nostrils were filled with a tantalizing blend of frying potatoes, fish and coffee.

The tanned young man approached with a thermometer. "Under your tongue, if you please," he said. "If you haven't any fever you can eat."

"I haven't. I feel all right," replied Cora.

"We'll see."

Cora, as it chanced, was correct. He drew a table to the side of the cot and placed his chair opposite her. "No pneumonia this time," he said, and they began their dinner.

"What is your name?"

"Cora Greene."

"Miss?"

"Nothin' different."

"Why do you affect the wedding ring, then?"

"Oh, I *been* married. I can't get the ring off my finger, and I know I ain't gonna spend fifty cents to have it filed off."

"I see," said the young man.

"What's *your* name?"

"Blair."

There was a pause. "I hate that name," said Cora.

That ended the conversation for the meal. When they had finished Cora placed her bandaged feet on the floor. "I'll wash the dishes," she said.

Blair's eyes widened a little and he looked at her curiously.

"Not this time, thanks. Feet back in the bed, please." He set to work.

Cora's eyes drooped as she lay back, and, like a well-fed puppy, she again fell asleep.

VIOLET twilight covered the river, changing its muddy brown to inoffensive black, and turning it into a moving mirror which reflected the quarter-moon and the first stars. The house-boat drifted silently east and south. Over the edge of the little after-deck a big sweep, the size of a Navy cutter oar, extended into the water from a rowlock. Blair pushed this to and fro from time to time, avoiding snags, flats and whirling water. He seemed familiar with the river bed, for they never ran onto a shoal, and in an indifferent yet definite manner the boat seemed always to find her course in the racy places close to the crumbling banks. They kept pace with the floating débris.

Cora called from within, "Can I come out there?" For Cora this was an extraordinary concession to discipline.

"Come on."

She limped through the doorway and sat crosslegged on the deck. "When will we get to Kansas City, Mr. Blair?" she asked.

For a minute or two Blair busied himself with the oar, and then sat down beside her. "That requires a little explaining," he answered. "In the first place my moorings are not at Kansas City but at Kansas City, Kansas. Do you know where the Kaw River comes in between the two?"

Cora nodded.

"I am about a mile above that. We should arrive there before daylight; I hope so, anyway, because we may run into trouble otherwise. You probably don't know it, but if you get across the state line safely, it will only be after a lot of red tape that they can take you back again. Therefore it is to the advantage of those concerned that you don't cross the line. And since I have taken charge of you, I am anxious to see that you do. In going from Lansing to Kansas City, Missouri, you would naturally pass through Kansas City, Kansas; so the railroads and the stations may be watched. Luckily I have a car, such as it is, waiting for me in a garage near my mooring, so we will drive across one of the viaducts—there's a fair chance that way to get by. So—you see why it is important to start before daylight."

Cora considered. "There's only one thing I'd like to find out," she said; "and that is, how do you know what I was up for? I might have killed somebody for all you know."

"The searching party told me," he said.

"Oh!" Still she was not satisfied. "You never saw me before, did you?"

"For heaven's sake, whatever put that in your head? I certainly never saw you before in my life!"

"Well, do you know anything about me? Have you ever heard of me before?"

"I'm afraid you are asking a good many questions," said Blair. There was a silence while he attended to the rudder. He moved quickly and nervously, and after the boat was on her proper course, he took four matches to light his pipe. At last he asked, "Do you feel like talking?"

"I'd rather listen, a whole lot."

"I don't suppose it's fair," he said, "to expect you to answer questions after my refusal, but there are some things—" He paused and lighted his pipe again, but did not continue.

"Go ahead."

"There are some things I want to know, tremendously."

"Well, go ahead."

"Will you tell me about your marriage?"

"What about it?"

"When was it?"

"I was married when I was sixteen; I'm twenty-four now."

"Pretty young, wasn't it?"

"Oh, I wanted to get away from home. I couldn't stand it; nagging, nagging, nagging all the time. Father owned a grocery, and he wanted us to work in there, but they made us go to school. I had a sister two years younger than me. I'd a lot rather done it, because he said we could go out nights when we were old enough to work. As it was we couldn't go anywhere. Everything we did was wrong, especially me. Lois was the baby. She's dead now."

"So you married to get out of it?"

"Uh-huh."

"Was it a happy marriage?"

CORA did not answer immediately. "It might 'a' been, if it wasn't for bootleg and a lot of other things. My husband had good people somewhere in Kansas City, but he was kinda wild. I guess he'd have to be to marry me. I was nobody but a fool kid down in Jefferson City. That's my home, or that is where it used to be. He used to come down there to see the daughter of somebody in politics, some old graybeard that hung around the Capitol building all the time. But I never saw the girl. Anyway, he got talking to me one day in a soda fountain; that's how I met him.

"We married in a month. He said he wanted to get away from home, too, and get a job in Chicago. But he never got the job. I worked at Field's for a couple of years in the lace collars and cuffs. Oh, he picked up work now and then, but he got drunk and lost the jobs. We had a baby. It ain't a very pretty story."

"Please go on."

"A little while before my baby was born he came home with a lot of money. He must have had six or eight hundred dollars, I guess. He'd had a few drinks, too, and nothing would do but we move out of where we were to another place—to a fine four-room apartment. I admit the place we had wasn't much, but it was the best I could do. It was one room, and awful hot. Anyway, we moved into a place with nice furniture, and he hired a girl to cook so that I wouldn't have to work until after the baby was born. That tickled me to death, but I found out later he had been keeping company with this girl.

"The night my baby was born he and she were at a dance. After it was all over the doctor came and some way he pulled me through all right. Oh, how he did bawl Teddy out! Teddy was my husband. It didn't do any good, though. He took it all out on me.

"I didn't mind Teddy hitting me so much; I got used to that. I got so I could almost think about something else because it didn't really hurt, inside. It seemed like every time he hit me I would just draw up a lot closer to myself inside, shutting him out. You don't understand that. But the thing that did use to hurt was that girl. He wouldn't let me fire her. That was pretty bad, having her around sneering at me all the time, while I was nursing my baby.

"It didn't last long. He had an accident one night in a pool hall—resisting arrest, the paper said. He had an older brother in Kansas City who he used to call the preacher; this brother came and took his body. I never saw him again."

"Why did you stay with him so long? Why didn't you leave him?"

"I don't know. I don't like to give up on things; I guess that's why. Anyway, it was worse after. It has been worse and better, too. I made more money because I left the lace collars and cuffs and got to be a model for hats, but it cost so much to have my baby looked after during the day that I had to quit and get a job nights. Another girl slept with me and she was there in case anything happened or the baby needed anything.

"I went to work at the Friars' Inn, working in the check-room for a while; then I was cigarette girl; and then Mike put me on as an entertainer. I can sing a little. That was pretty good—sixty a week and tips; the only thing was I didn't get enough sleep. Never got home until five or six, Saturday nights, and holidays later, and then the baby all day. I kept it up as long as I could and saved my money until I got sick. I wanted to go home but I knew if I wrote, father would turn me down, so I packed up and went. Thought when he saw the baby he might take me in and let me work in the grocery.

"THERE was nothing stirring, though, and I had to hit pretty low after that because Jeff City is a small place. I went to live with the laundress that did our washing. She was sure good to me, and if I ever get on the up I'm going to make it right with her some way. I had sold nearly all my clothes except what was on my back, so I wore my sister's that came to be washed. Everything she sent over I wore for one day and then washed it and sent it back.

"That was the toughest time I ever had, I guess, because I felt so rotten all the time. It went on for several months until Mrs. Eaton—that's the laundress—got a letter from her sister in Leavenworth saying she could give me a job trimming hats. Honest, it was like hearing somebody'd left me a fortune. After I got there, though, I felt worse and worse all the time. Finally I couldn't get up one morning, and the baby sick, too.

"I lived in a rooming-house with a lot of old women who hadn't any better to do than make trouble for others, and they persuaded the landlady that I was a bad girl. They couldn't understand why I used my maiden name, and I couldn't tell them about Teddy being shot; I wanted to tell but I just couldn't. And if I'd lied they wouldn't have believed me. I ain't good at lying. Anyway, the coppers came one time and took my baby to Kansas City to some home there, and me they took to the cooler. I'm going after my baby now. That's all there is to it—you wanted it and now you heard it. Sounds kinda bad but there's others had it a lot worse, I guess."

"I suppose so," said Blair, and there was a long silence. The moon was higher now, higher and smaller and brighter; there was a little breeze that brushed faintly around the corners of the floating shack, lifting tiny bright sparks from Blair's pipe. "How are you going about finding your baby?"

"I thought I'd get there first, and then dope that out later. I'll have to get some kind of work before I can take care of her." Cora stretched out flat on the deck and looked up at the heavens, her hands clasped under her hair. "The main thing's to get to Kansas City now."

"I think we'll make it all right," Blair assured her. "Though we may have a little excitement doing it."

"But even if we get away with it, how do you dare take me across there? That's going from one state to another—ain't that against the rules?"

Blair laughed. "It depends on why I am taking you," he said. "In this case it's all right because I'm going to take you home."

"Where!"

"To my home, where my mother is."

"The devil you *are*."

"Do you distrust me, Cora?"

Cora hesitated. "Listen," she said. "If you want to finish off the good turn you're doing me in grand style—just give me a few dollars and some kind of a long coat to cover this wreck I have on, and turn me loose. It's all I want."

"That happens to be your idea of finishing it in grand style, but mine is better. You will see."

"But what's the point in taking me to your house? There's nothing for me there; and I got a life-size picture of your mother being glad to see me."

"It's my responsibility. Your cue, Cora, is to leave everything to me. It's worked out all right so far, and if you do as I say you'll be happy."

"Happy!" Cora laughed. "That's funny. I quit building air castles a long time ago."

"There's no harm in trying, is there? Perhaps your luck will take a turn. You leave it all to me and quit worrying."

"I guess nothing could really do any harm. I've got into the habit of doing what you say in the last few hours, anyway. I can't be much worse off. Kinda reminds me of part of an old coon song I used to sing at the Friars':

"Where am 'at frien'?
De one 'at use to len'—
Seems like Mister Ha'd Luck
Gonna dog me to de en'.

Believe me, it sure has seemed like it, too. I'll take a chance, though, and if it flivvers, why, it'll just be another one, that's all."

Blair nodded. "That's fair enough," he said. "Now I think you'd better go in and lie down. In a few hours you may need all your energy."

For a time Cora lay still, but at last she rose, with a little sigh. In the door she turned, a bright smile on her lips. "I got a feeling Mister Hard Luck ain't gonna dog *me* to the end," she said, and disappeared.

"You have him on the run," called Blair, and he grasped the steering oar with a sudden determination. An entirely unprecedented disturbance was in the process of gathering around his heart.

CORA flattened herself tightly against the shadowed part of the alley wall and stared down the dim street toward the entrance to the garage. He must hurry now.

A solitary unsteady figure was crossing the street and coming toward the alley, whistling. Then a pair of lights came out of the garage, but they swung the other way. The unsteady one approached and halted at the sight of Cora, swinging a little from side to side. He was dressed in dirty denim and wore no hat; he was very unkempt and very drunk.

"Good evenin'."

Cora said nothing.

"Say!" He spat vigorously and made a play at pulling up his overalls. "You look lonesome. How 'bout little stroll fer old times' sake?" He came up close, extending a thick, hairy paw ingratiatingly, and brought his odorous face close to Cora's. "Any good in yer mind?"

Cora edged a little to one side. "You better move yourself away from here," she said. "I'm waiting for some one."

"An' here I am. Ain't that lucky?"

Cora smiled. "It's not you. Go on now or you'll wish you had."

"Well, why won't I do? Ain't I all right?" He suddenly struck a match and peered into Cora's face. "Say, you're *purty!*"

"Listen!" said Cora. Her hand shot out sharply and pushed him back. "You get out of here now."

The drunk, at this, burst into gales of inexplicable laughter, which sounded through the silent street like a fire alarm. "Aw, come on! Come on, Nelly. I won't do you wrong." He bellowed like a bull and shook with merriment. "I ain't so damn bad when I'm fixed up, kid; on the square I ain't. I got good clothes home. Come on, you'll see."

Cora cast an anguished glance in the direction of the garage, but instead of an automobile, she discovered a policeman, within a few yards of the alley and fast approaching. For a bare instant she remained paralyzed, and then with an abrupt half-turn she grasped her annoyer's arm. "Be quiet and I'll come," she whispered, and led him out into the street. "You have to cut this out, Frank, that's all there is to it," she said in a clear voice. "This is the last time I bring you home, and don't forget it. You'll get yourself arrested."

The policeman stood before them. "It's all right, officer," she said. "Don't take him in. He'll be all right now."

The policeman hesitated. "Well," he said, "you'll have to be a little quiet; a little quiet, that's all. That noise don't get by here."

"Yes, sir."

He walked on, and another pair of lights came through the garage door and turned toward them.

"Blair!" called Cora, and the car drew up at the curb. The door swung open and Cora sprang toward it; but her companion caught her wrist with a gorilla grip.

"No, you don't," he said.

In a flash Blair was out of the car—a very different Blair, with a pipe jack-handle in one hand and with blazing eyes. "You let go of that girl," he ordered.

"Who in hell are you?"

The jack-handle cracked down on the drunk's arm and he released his quarry with a howl. The policeman stopped and turned, while Cora and Blair jumped into the car.

"Around the block," said Cora quickly. "There's a copper down there."

THE car whirled, ran up on the opposite curbing, and made the turn. A shrill blast of a whistle sounded as they spun around the corner.

"We're in for it good and hot now," Blair muttered, and stepped on the accelerator.

"The drunken fool!" said Cora. "Give her the gas!"

Blair shot one look of admiration at the excited face beside him and settled down to business. They raced east for six blocks, the increasing speed smoothing the bumps—one block north, then east again and onto the inter-city viaduct, a straight mile of smooth, broad macadam. Cora glanced back. Two blocks in the rear was a single searchlight of rapidly increasing diameter, accompanied by the disconcerting thunder of a motor cycle.

"Let's go, Blair. We can't get stopped on this side, or I'll take the train back to Lawrence."

They went.

The motor cycle roared past when they were a half-block east of the viaduct on Sixth Street.

"This, Cora, is Missouri," said Blair, and slowed down to a stop.

The motor cycle turned and drove alongside; pulling the wheel back on its stilts, the officer leaned against Blair's car, his foot on the running-board. "Well," he said, "what's the story?"

"Do you mind going around and looking at the red cross on my radiator?" said Blair.

The officer complied and returned. "Doctor, eh?"

Blair drew a number of letters and papers from his pocket and handed them to his captor. "I'm Dr. Blair, and I'm on a hurry call, so please take my number and let me go. You can check it up all right."

"Who's this with you?"

"If it has anything to do with it, this is my wife. She used to be a trained nurse, and she sometimes helps me out in an emergency. You're jeopardizing a life by holding me here; may I go now?"

The officer stepped back. "Shoot," he said.

They drove away. "It's rather fortunate he didn't notice the Missouri license," said Blair, grinning. "According to that I should have been going the other direction if I were on a call. But he didn't."

"Mister Hard Luck had his back turned, I guess," said Cora.

"He'll stay that way, as far as you're concerned."

CORA laughed. "I'll believe it when it comes off. But I'm hoping. That's more than I've done for some time."

The street lights were still on when they passed the station and went into Penn Valley, but the buildings and trees had all turned gray with the morning. Cora slid far down and rested her head on the back of the seat, her deep brown eyes half closed.

"Well, Cora," she said, "wonder where you're going now?"

"They tell me anticipation is better than realization," answered Blair.

"They told you some truth."

After fifteen minutes of silence they turned off the thoroughfare into a quiet tree-lined street and stopped. Cora looked out at a large frame house of eminent respectability set far back in a deep elm-covered yard. It seemed wonderfully quiet and peaceful, the peace of a house lived in for many years. Blair assisted her out and they walked through the trees toward the porch. He opened the door with a key and led her into a broad hall, and thence to a dim living-room.

"I want you to sit here, Cora. Mother will have to dress, but I'll bring her as soon as I can."

"I look fine to see anybody."

"Don't worry about that," Blair said, and walked away. At the door he turned. "And Cora—open your mouth and shut your eyes!"

To Cora it seemed like hours, but her wait was only a few minutes. Twice she rose and walked to the window to overcome an almost unconquerable drowsiness. Once she thought of escape. But the big, soft chair soothed her to content, and she allowed her eyes to close.

A slight sound awoke her. She looked up to see the lady of the picture, looking down with a smile and a mistiness around her blue eyes.

"I am so glad you have come home, dear," she said softly. "I tried very hard to persuade Teddy to bring you years ago."

"Teddy!" said Cora. "You—you are his mother—then! I—I thought so—when I saw your picture—on his boat—"

She jerked her finger toward Dr. Blair. He came across the room toward her, smiling.

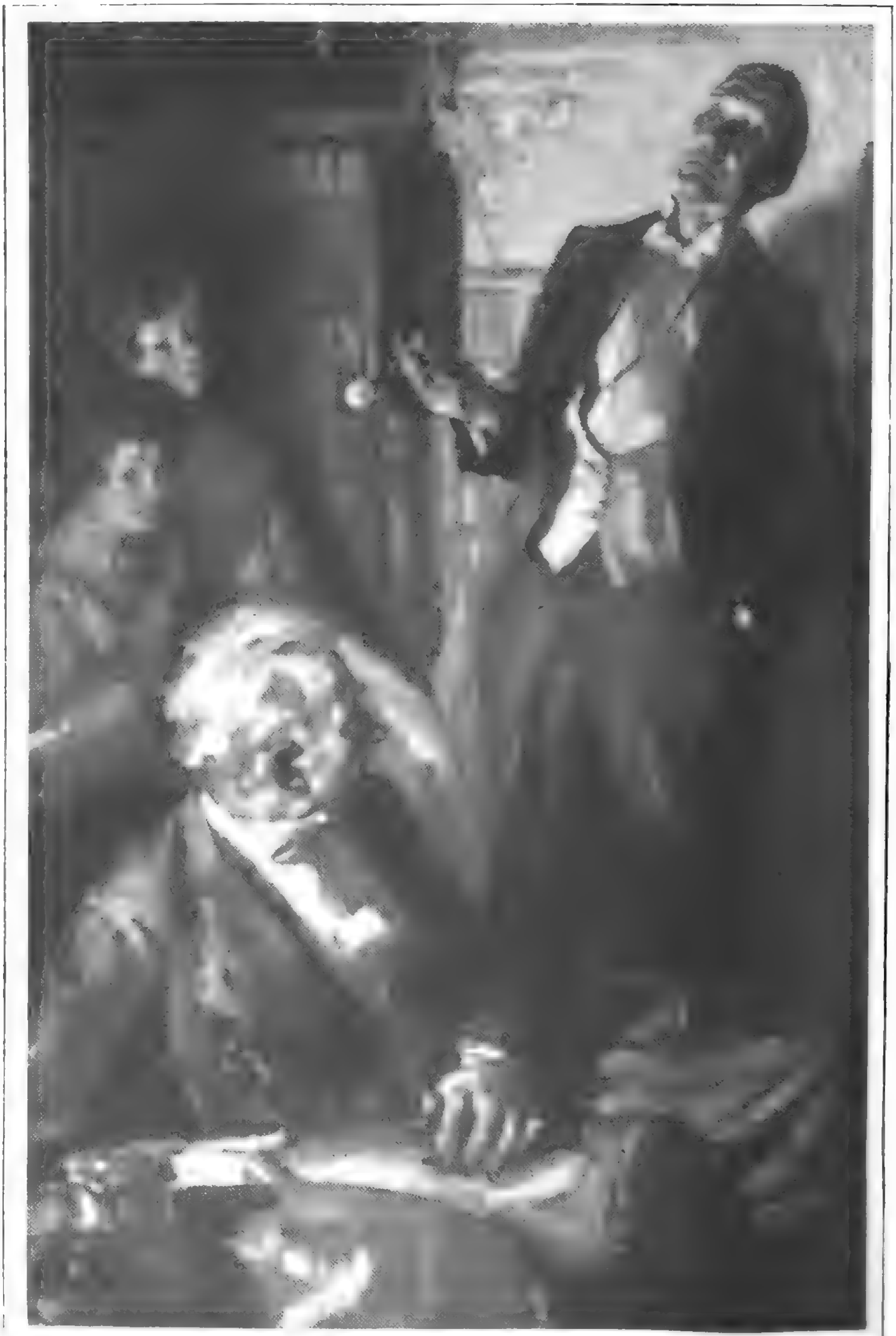
"Told you Mister Hard Luck was out!" he said. "I knew you, Cora—soon as I saw you. We'd had that picture. Lordy—we've looked all over for you—couldn't get track of you. We felt—well, we knew Ted hadn't always done all he should. I didn't know, till you told me, what you'd been doing—didn't know but that you might have got into some bad trouble—I wouldn't blame you if you had! Now—well, we'll clear that all up in no time. And the baby—they'll have to tell us where she is—"

"I—" Cora was crying. "I—you mean—it's all right? I'm going to have my baby—here?"

"Where else?" said Mrs. Blair, gently.

"Where else, indeed!" Blair echoed.

Everybody's Magazine, June, 1924



"Nancy," said Mr. Maturin softly, "to satisfy your mother and grandfather of the inevitability of your choice, I have—" Lord Alastare's voice interrupted like an ax.

The Ace of Cads

Shooting Whimsically at Virtues So Overdeveloped That They Have Become Frailties—That Is Arlen's Specialty. This Time He Takes a Fall Out of Pride

By Michael Arlen

Author of "The Sheik of Alabam"

Illustration by Lawrence Herndon

IT WAS a little after a midnight in late November of 1923. The rain slanted bitterly on London, and up Piccadilly, which is the direction of our tale, a shrewd wind blew it about in piercing eddies, as though intent to inflict with ultimate misery the mean bundles of humanity that lay against each other on the benches that face the Green Park.

And it was on the Green Park side of Piccadilly, which has been called "the silky side" by polite essayists, that at about this hour a gentleman, noticeable for his height and the assurance of his carriage, was to be seen walking. His dark overcoat open, and showing an expanse of white shirt-front and waistcoat, his silk hat rammed over his right eyebrow as though to dare a tornado to embarrass it, he strode up from Hyde Park Corner at a pace which, while not at all leisurely, seemed to symbolize an entire absence of interest in time and destination—which, after all, are two parts of life, the third being left to the discretion of Providence. His face, too, as he passed through the dim circles of lamplight, was as though set with a profound carelessness; and, though that of a man still young enough, and possessed of attractions of a striking order, held only too plainly on it the marks of a wanton and dissipated life.

It was with such epithets, indeed, and some even more definite, that his more austere friends had some time before finally disembarrassed themselves of the acquaintance of Mr. Capel Maturin—for such was the handsome gentleman's name. A penniless cadet of a county family, Mr. Maturin, after a doubtful youth, had in his early thirties been left a fortune by an affectionate uncle; and was now considering if a decade was well spent in reducing that fortune to as invisible an item as, so Mr. Maturin had put it, a penny on a profiteer. It was a question which demanded deep thought and careful answering. Mr. Capel Maturin, to whom deep thought was not pleasing, decided that the answer was a lemon.

It was as though on the impulse of an afterthought that he suddenly stayed his walk before one of the benches laden with the ragged, sodden bundles of humanity. It would have required the attention of a student of such things to decide which of the four or five was of the male and which of the female of the species. Mr. Maturin, who was a graduate only of the baser arts, gave them scarcely a glance, as, a singular smile crossing his clean-cut face but leaving untouched the callous blue eyes that were like blue stones, and withdrawing his hand from an inner pocket, he said at large: "Here! And bless you!" and scattered some bank notes over the bewildered wretches.

Quickly enough they caught at the notes, not grabbing nor quarreling overmuch, for there were a couple or so for each; and when they peered their wonder up at their tall benefactor, he was staring moonstruck at a point somewhere over their heads (where lay Down Street Tube station) and across his face was stamped that singular smile: for Mr. Maturin had in his youth been a great reader of tales of high romance and desperate villainy, and now could not but smile at himself in an ancient situation, for is not that of a penniless spendthrift, like that of a man in love, a situation with a beard on it?

A POLICEMAN, his black cape glistening like black armor, approached heavily, his august impersonality informed for the moment with a faint air of kindly interest. But the wretches on the bench stared fearfully at the Law, for the Law does not ordinarily recognize any connection between a person with no visible means of support and the Bank of England.

"Good evening, sir," said the Law to Mr. Maturin, in a friendly way.

Mr. Maturin returned the greeting, somewhat absently, and was turning to continue his walk when an anxious voice from the bench whispered:

"'Ere, sir, these are fivers, sir!"

"I beg your pardon?" said Mr. Maturin; not, you know, in any spirit of provocation, but because he really had not heard. The while the Law, quite impersonally, took one of the bank notes from the poor man's hand and, quite impersonally, examined it against the lamplight.

"These 'ere," said the Law, "are five-pun notes, sir."

"True," said Mr. Maturin. "True. Good night, constable."

The constable, quite impersonally, replaced the bank note in the eager hand from which it had come. He had done his duty, and can even a constable do more?

"Good night, sir," said he, in a friendly way; and Mr. Maturin, for long devoid of common sense, and now entirely devoid of money as well, continued his walk in the rain.

His direction led him inevitably under the pillared archway that protects the entrance of the Ritz Hotel from the elements; and as he strode under this archway, his steps ringing sharply on the dry white stones, it was distinctly brought to his notice that he was being followed.

He did not, however, turn his head, nor show any other sign of interest or distress. Mr. Maturin's was a nature curiously lacking in any interest as to what might at any moment be happening behind him; and one of his favorite mots had ever been, at any hour of day or night: "Well, chaps, let's face it!" Though, of course, there were not wanting those who ventured to doubt whether Mr. Maturin would so readily have faced things had he not such a prepossessing face to face them with. "Ah," Mr. Maturin would say, "you're envious. Let's face it."

On this occasion he allowed himself to reach the corner of Arlington Street before he swung round and "faced it."

"Well?" said Mr. Maturin.

But he who was being faced appeared to welcome rather than evade the occasion. He was a small, seedy man in a bowler-hat, on which the rain had made a puddle or two, and he looked both fatigued and annoyed as he panted up to Mr. Maturin. His manner of speech was strictly in accord with his appearance.

"'Ere," said he, without courtesy, "you do walk a pace, you do! Been trapesing after you all the way from Belgrave Square, I 'ave, and I'm no chicken, I'm not. Mr. Matcherin, are you?"

"Sir," said Mr. Maturin, "though I am at a loss to remember where we first became acquainted, and quite overcome by your hearty greeting, it would be only civil in me to suggest an exchange of courtesies. What, pray, is your name?"

"Aw, get off it!" snapped the small, seedy man. "Gent told me to give yer this."

"Thank you," said Mr. Maturin (for he was a man who thought that manners never did any harm), and quickly opened the envelope, which was addressed to him; and drew from it a folded sheet of note paper, and from that a folded bank note.

The small, seedy man, who was watching, looked surprised and hurt; he sighed.

"You're still here?" said Mr. Maturin.

"I am that!" said the small, seedy man doggedly.

MR. MATURIN then gave his full attention to the note paper, while the folded bank note hung tantalizingly from between the knuckles of two fingers. The small, seedy man stared at it, and, removing his bowler-hat, scratched his head.

"If I'd *known!*" he muttered; but Mr. Maturin was engrossed in the letter, which ran thus:

> Enclosed Mr. Capel Maturin will find a bank note, which is in the nature of a present to him from the sender: who, if he was not misinformed, this night saw Mr. Maturin lose the last of his fortune at baccarat. Should Mr. Maturin be of a temperament that does not readily accept gifts from strangers, which the sender takes the liberty to doubt (believing as he does in Mr. Maturin's good sense), he may give the bank note to the bearer, who will no doubt be delighted with it. The sender merely wishes Mr. Maturin to know that the bank note, having left his hands, does not interest him. There are no conditions whatsoever attached to the gift. But should Mr. Maturin retain some parts of honor, which the sender takes the liberty to doubt, he may return service for service. A closed motor will be awaiting him at the corner of Clarges Street. Au revoir, Mr. Maturin: or—should you be quite incurious as to whither the car may take you—adieu, Mr. Maturin.

Mr. Maturin thoughtfully tore the note into several more or less equal parts and dropped them to the pavement. The folded bank note he, very thoughtfully, put into an inner pocket.

" 'Ere, sir!" whined the small, seedy man.

"Tell me," said Mr. Maturin, "what manner of gentleman was the gent who gave you this?"

"Bigger than you," snarled the small, seedy man. "Blast 'im, that's wot!"

"And why these harsh words?"

" 'E gives me two bob to go trapesing after you to give you a bank note! Two bob! And you're so blarsted superior that you ain't even looked to see 'ow much it is."

"Well, if you insist," smiled Mr. Maturin; and, producing the bank note, unfolded it.

The small, seedy man gasped. It was a thousand-pound note. He had not dreamt that the world held such a thing.

"Gawd, oh, Gawd!" he sighed. "If I'd only *known!*"

"Well, good night, little man," said Mr. Maturin. "And thank you."

" 'Ere, and ain't you even going to give me a little bit of somethink?" pleaded the small, seedy man.

Mr. Maturin felt carefully in his pockets for what he knew was not in them.

"I'm afraid this note you've brought me is all I have," he said with regret. "I'm really very sorry. Good night."

"Now look 'ere—"

"You may go to hell," said Mr. Maturin, and, crossing Piccadilly where the glare of an arc-lamp stamped the mire with a thousand yellow lights, was lost in the shadow of the great walls of Devonshire House.

Everybody's Magazine, June, 1924

At the corner of Clarges Street he came upon a long, closed car.

WE LIVE in a world of generalizations, which well-informed people never tire of telling us to mistrust. There is one, for instance, which speaks of a bad conscience being a sorry bedfellow. Mr. Maturin, however, whose conscience—all London would tell you—could not but have been as black as night, instantly went to sleep in the car, to awake only when, the car having stopped, the young chauffeur opened the door of the tonneau and said:

"Sir! Sir!"

Mr. Maturin found himself before the doors of a house of noble proportions; from the head of the broad steps he looked about him, and recognized the long narrow park of trees as that of Eaton Square.

The door was opened by one invisible; a voice said:

"Come in, Mr. Maturin."

Within, in a hall suitable to a house of noble proportions, floored with checkered black-and-white marble and hung with somber tapestries, while the ceiling was so high as to refuse itself to exact scrutiny, he found himself faced by an old gentleman who, as the seedy messenger had said, was even taller than himself. This tall and lean and massively white-haired man needed only the long saber-wound across the lined cheek to add a look of ferocity to the already formidable person of a *grand seigneur*.

But Mr. Maturin was not, it seemed, impressed. Himself was, in appearance at least, no unworthy Englishman, or, shall we say, Norman; and he could not help smiling, just a little, at the savage contempt in the old gentleman's eyes. For it was contempt. "Let's face it. . . ."

"It is good of you to have come, Mr. Maturin. Although, I must admit, I expected you."

"It is a rare pleasure for me to do what is expected of me," smiled Mr. Maturin.

"H'm! You are not serious, then?" And the deep old eyes seemed to pierce the younger man with an unutterable contempt.

But Mr. Maturin only smiled, and his was an attractive smile, as smiles go. Women had liked it. These cads, men said, have a way with women.

Mr. Maturin had observed the formidable old man that night at the gaming-club, and had instantly recognized him: for the great height, the saber-wound, the mass of loosely brushed white hair and the iron eyes under the fierce white eyebrows were the well-known marks of my lord Viscount Alastare, a gentleman of a past century who, it was said, disdained any part in this. Mr. Maturin had, for a passing moment, wondered what the old gentleman was doing in a gaming-club; but now, revealed as the donor of the magnificent note, he suspected what had brought Lord Alastare down from his proud seclusion. That is why Mr. Maturin smiled. The hazards of life always entertained Mr. Maturin, except, of course, when they bored him.

"Why, I'm serious enough," said he. "I take your gift—"

"Ha!" snapped Lord Alastare.

"—in the spirit in which you give it."

"And what the devil can you know of that, sir?"

"Nothing, nothing. Let's face it," said Mr. Maturin peaceably.

Lord Alastare's brittle eyes snapped at this "modern levity," but without another word he led the way into a wide, dim room lined with many books.

From the shadows a lady emerged, bearing herself with sadness and dignity. She must have been very beautiful when young; but she was no longer young, and dignity rather than grace was the expression of her figure; now, at this moment, was she perhaps in her best looks; and her eyes rather pitifully showed some deep strain. She very distantly acknowledged Mr. Maturin's bow; and, maybe because vanity does not die with youth, retired into the shadows of the room.

"I BELIEVE you have met my daughter-in-law," said Lord Alastare. "She and my granddaughter are staying with me for a few days—"

From the shadows Mrs. Alastare spoke quickly, almost breathlessly, as though she would be done with something she must say:

"Mr. Maturin, I have tried to persuade my father-in-law against taking this step. I feel that there *must* be ways of effecting our—our wish other than one which will offend you so deeply—"

"Eleanour, would you kindly leave this to me, as you promised?" snapped the old gentleman; and his voice was like a bar of iron. "Mr. Maturin is, I fancy, past taking offense at the truth."

"It depends on the truth," said Mr. Maturin. "So far, I am mystified."

"You lie, Mr. Maturin. You are not mystified."

"Very well, sir. I lie. I am not mystified."

Spoke Mrs. Alastare, in distress:

"I think, then, I will leave you, since I can do nothing—"

"You will stay, Eleanour." A harsh old man, Lord Alastare.

"Yes, please stay, Mrs. Alastare," begged Mr. Maturin. "If I am called a liar by my host while you are present, Heaven knows what I shall be called when you are not. Please stay. And, if I may, I would congratulate you on a very beautiful and talented daughter."

Quivering with sudden passion, the gigantic old man raised an arm. . . . Mr. Maturin did not move, nor flinch: he half smiled, in a way he had.

"Now, sir, don't be silly," he said.

"By God, you are an unbelievable cad!" just whispered the old man, reluctantly lowering his arm. "You are the—the ace of cads, Mr. Maturin."

"Father, *please!*" sighed the lady wearily.

"Never mind, Mrs. Alastare," said Mr. Maturin ever so sincerely; and it was his merry practice to be most amiable at livid moments. "I admit I would be annoyed at being called the deuce of cads, just as I would be annoyed at being run over by a Ford car. Such is my vanity. But please continue, Lord Alastare. Your last words were that I am the ace of cads. And then what? I would beg you not to be restrained by any such small consideration as my presence in your house."

"Sit down," said a hidalgo to a hound. But it was Lord Alastare who sat down, while the other remained standing before the fireplace. Mr. Maturin, for all his forty-odd years of self-indulgence, had still a very good figure, which was, of course, further advantaged by the fall of his white waistcoat, and he liked to make the most of himself. Mrs. Alastare, a shadow of resigned distress, sat in a deep chair away in the dimness of the room. The thousands of books round the paneled walls, bound in ancient greens and browns, lent a fictitious air of scholarly dignity to an occasion which must have embarrassed any one but an ace of cads.

"As you may have gathered, Mr. Maturin, I want you to do me a service—"

"Only a great brain like mine would have divined it, sir."

"Mr. Maturin, would you not provoke my father-in-law!" spoke the lady sharply, and was as sharply told:

"This is men's business, Eleanour. Now, sir! My son, this lady's husband, was killed in the war, as you may know."

"Yes, sir."

"The best men *were* killed, Mr. Maturin. God is not very generous to fine men in time of war. You, I believe, were years ago cashiered from the Brigade of Guards for drunkenness in a restaurant?"

"I assure you, sir, that the provocation was more than I could bear," explained Mr. Maturin: his first serious moment, this. "I am, you must know, very musical. And in that restaurant the orchestra would insist on playing Mendelssohn's 'Spring Song.' Now I put it to you, Lord Alastare, could a man bear Mendelssohn's 'Spring Song' over dinner? I begged the conductor to cease, once, twice, and thrice; and then, you know, I wasted a bottle of wine over his head. I was hasty, let's face it. But the provocation!"

Spoke Mrs. Alastare dimly:

"Father, I believe Mr. Maturin has a D.S.O. with a bar."

"ELEANOUR, will you please not interrupt us again? Mr. Maturin, I apologize if I have seemed to reflect at all on your courage. Such men as you are, I believe, frequently very courageous—"

"Only when drunk, Lord Alastare."

"Quite. Your modesty takes as singular a form as your manners. My son, I was saying, was killed, and his son and daughter were left with only their mother to take care of them. My grandchildren, Mr. Maturin—heirs to an ancient name and a fortune which must, by decent people, be taken as a responsibility rather than as a means for self-indulgence.

"I wished my grandchildren to be brought up to a lofty conception of the duties of their station. My son had, quite rightly, a great regard for the strength and good sense of his wife, and left her as their sole guardian. I, who have a no less regard for my daughter-in-law, was content with the situation; and continued to lead the very retired life to which my many years entitle me, even had I been able to endure the manners of the generation of which, Mr. Maturin, you are such an elegant example. Thus, it was only lately that I heard of my grandson's folly.

"The modern way of bringing up children is very different from that which obtained in my youth. For good or ill, they are allowed more freedom in every way. In my time such men as you, sir, were not so easily enabled to corrupt them by example and companionship; such men as you, sir, were not received in decent houses. Your attraction for youth must be a source of gratification to you, Mr. Maturin. You have corrupted my grandson, sir! You flattered him by treating him as a grown man; you taught him to gamble, to dissipate, to drink, and, worst of all, to think uncleanly. Both my grandson and granddaughter, as you were aware, have fortunes of their own, left to them by their mother's father—and, by God, sir, you played the devil with that boy's money, didn't you! It is not for nothing, Mr. Maturin, that you are spoken of as the best piquet player in London. My grandson would, I am sure, give you a certificate—"

"I would be even better pleased, Lord Alastare, with a check for what he owes me."

"You shall have it. Eleanour, my checkbook. A star in hell, Mr. Maturin, would not be more lonely than a debt of honor on your person. . . . The boy's mother came to me, in distress, and told me of the rot that had set in him. She did not know who or what was at the back of it: for the boy, left alone, had none of the qualities that make a drunkard or a gambler; nor, without example and instruction, would he have shown any signs of attaining to that degree of eminence in the abyss which is called being 'a success with women.' God help them! I dealt with him sharply enough, as you are no doubt aware; and he is now expiating his folly and, I hope, regaining his health and self-respect by some hard work on one of my Canadian farms. In my final interview with him he defended you, Mr. Maturin. He remained, you understand, a gentleman even after his connection with you, and like a gentleman he spoke up for his friend."

"He was a good boy," said Mr. Maturin softly. "I liked him."

"Quite. So you corrupted him. Mr. Maturin, you have plundered the best years of my grandson's youth! Have you anything to say?"

"If you don't mind," said Mr. Maturin, "I will reserve my defense. Isn't there still worse to come?"

LORD ALASTARE stared curiously at the elegant figure who stood with his back to the fire, warming his hands. Lord Alastare was, as far as it was possible in him, nonplused. He was a great reader of those memoirs and belles-lettres which tell intimately of the lives of gentlemen of more careless and debonair times: the anatomy of galanterie, scoundrelism and coxcombry, as exemplified in the Restoration gallants and the eighteenth-century fops, had interested the old gentleman's leisure; but never had he thought he would be faced by one so completely unashamed, by one who wore the evil *dandysme* of his soul as nonchalantly as a monocle.

Lord Alastare realized now that he had made a mistake in sending him the bank note. He had sent it to arouse the man's curiosity and thus insure his presence; but, more particularly, as a bribe for what he now wanted Mr. Maturin to do. A thousand pounds more or less did not matter very much to Lord Alastare; but, he now realized, it did not matter very much to Capel Maturin, either.

The old gentleman's voice, when he continued, was very much lower; and one less hardened than Mr. Maturin must have been a little affected by the slight tremor that played in that proud old voice.

"My grandson, you corrupted. My granddaughter, you have se—"

"Dear!" cried Mrs. Alastare.

Mr. Maturin was quite silent.

"Perhaps it was too harsh a word," conceded Lord Alastare—he *conceded!* And his voice was scarcely audible, while his eyes seemed enchanted by the black shine of the ebony paper-knife in his hand. "I sent my grandson away. He will, I hope, come back clean and ready to take my name and place. I am very old, Mr. Maturin. My peace, my comfort, my heart's ease, have taken to themselves an importance which a few years ago I would have disdained to give them. And you have chosen this time in which to wreck them! Was it essential to you, Mr. Maturin, that you should pilfer my granddaughter from me?"

"Why do you say 'pilfer,' sir? Am I not allowed to be like any other man, and make love?"

"Men," said Lord Alastare, "did not, I thought, make love to young girls. Bankrupts, I am sure, should not. Mr. Maturin, I am not insulting you wantonly, but—"

"I quite understand, Lord Alastare. Let's face the facts."

"Yes. My granddaughter has just come of age—and, incidentally, into her fortune. You are, I believe, forty or so—"

"Forty-seven."

"They become you very well, I must say. But, even so, there is a grave disparity of age between you; and, Mr. Maturin, there is an even graver disparity of everything else. By God, sir, how could you, how could any man like you, have so blinded himself to all the decencies of life as we know it, to put himself in the way of a girl like my granddaughter! If this is life, man, I do not understand life!"

"I have never thought I did," murmured Mr. Maturin. "I've just tried to live it—after my fashion."

Lord Alastare looked up from the black shine of the paper-knife, and long and keenly he looked into his adversary's callous eyes. What he saw in them, what depth of irony or what faint atom of godliness, who shall say? There are no words for the queer reactions of men upon men.

He rose, and steadied himself by pressing his knuckles on the writing-table.

"MR. MATURIN, I have had the greatest shock of my life today. I would rather have been dead than have heard what I have heard today. My granddaughter told me she was going to marry you."

"A brave girl!" said Mr. Maturin softly.

"Cruel, too—cruel with the cruelty you have taught her." And then the old gentleman's voice trembled pitifully. "Mr. Maturin, you cannot be serious!"

"I can be in love!" said Mr. Maturin, and he said it very coldly.

"Love!" echoed the voice of Mrs. Alastare; and the figure in the shadows seemed to grow in stature to meet the eyes of the two men. "Dear Heaven, love! You are of the world, Mr. Maturin, and surely you know that for men like you it's a fine word for a physical distemper. The lives that have been crucified in the name of love! And now you would crucify my little Nancy's!"

"Come, come, Eleanour—not so dramatic! You will make the man shy. Mr. Maturin," the old gentleman went on warmly, "I cannot stop the girl, as you know. She came of age today, and she has her own fortune. Man, is there no way in which I can appeal to you—I or her mother? Do you want me to beg her from you?"

"No," snapped Mr. Maturin. "You couldn't, anyway."

"Thank you," Lord Alastare almost smiled. "Yes, I am a little too old to learn how to beg. I pay you the compliment of thinking, Mr. Maturin, that you are not intending to marry my girl primarily for her money. Am I right?"

"These things get a little entangled," Mr. Maturin explained seriously. "Tonight, as you saw, the cards ran very harshly against me. And as I came away from the place, I was so bored with myself that I emptied my pockets of the last penny I had. I was intending, you see, to begin life entirely afresh from tomorrow. With your granddaughter, if I may say so, I am like any other Englishman, sir, sentimental after my fashion. And I thought I wouldn't bring the taint of my money to my life with Nancy. You must allow me, Lord Alastare, to admire her, to respect her, and to love her."

"I do, Mr. Maturin—after your fashion! But fashions change."

"True; and so does the moon. But, though I love her, I must admit that her fortune adds a convenience to the arrangement. Let's face the facts, Lord Alastare. I would wish to marry your granddaughter if she were penniless. But why should I not marry her because she is not penniless? Really, Lord Alastare, I refuse to believe that life is like a novel by Charles Garvice."

"You hold her to her promise, then?" Lord Alastare's voice was barely audible.

"Mr. Maturin, *please!*" sighed Mrs. Alastare, a shadow of a voice from a shadow.

Mr. Maturin lit a cigarette, and inhaled it.

"Wasn't Nancy, then, at all swayed by your arguments against me?" he asked.

Lord Alastare raised and helplessly dropped a hand.

"A young girl!" he said. "Like my son, she defended you. You have some magic for youth, it seems. They admit your faults, but do not hold them against you. I have observed that it takes a man to dislike caddishness, Mr. Maturin. A girl overlooks it."

"PLEASE, Mr. Maturin," came the dim, tired voice of Mrs. Alastare, "I do not for a moment think that you are really intending to go on with this. You are a man of the world, and must know how impossible such a union will be. Won't you give my father-in-law the satisfaction of—"

"Eleanour, don't beg for me!"

Mr. Maturin turned, with that half-smile of his, toward Mrs. Alastare.

"You know, I think we have got hold of the wrong end of the stick," he said. "It isn't really much use persuading me to give her up—"

"How, sir?"

"Well, let's face it; we must persuade her to give me up."

Then silence walked heavily about the room, and at last fled before a sharp rattle, when my lord Alastare, with a gesture of distaste, dropped the paper-knife onto the writing-table.

"Otherwise," continued Mr. Maturin in a very reasonable voice, "otherwise, sir, if I were to break my promise to her, she would guess that it was at your persuasion—and you would be faced, for the rest of your days, by an accusing girl, which would be beastly for you, wouldn't it?"

"Do I understand you to be caring for my old age, Mr. Maturin?"

"You may understand what you like, sir. I am merely suggesting probabilities. If I give Nancy up without her consent, she will make a martyr of herself. I hate to do anything with so little artistry, sir. You understand me, Mrs. Alastare—"

"But!" cried Mrs. Alastare gladly. "Does this mean that you *will* give Nancy up? Father, I *knew* he would!"

"I am afraid you've misunderstood me, Mrs. Alastare. I will not give Nancy up."

"Pah!" snapped Lord Alastare.

"But I will persuade Nancy to give me up. Don't you think, Lord Alastare, that

that will be a more reasonable end to a deplorable connection? How much more fitting, after all, for a lady to disown a cad than for a cad to disown a lady!"

Lord Alastare seemed to smile.

"You are a dangerous comedian, Mr. Maturin. And how will you effect this finesse?"

"Is Nancy awake?"

"We are not working behind her back, sir. She knows you are in the house, and that we are—well, tackling you. Naturally, therefore, she is awake. But her belief in you is such that she almost smiled when I suggested that she had probably seen the last of you."

"Good girl," said Mr. Maturin softly. "Now, we must be very intelligent. Do you mind if I make a small speech?"

"I do, sir," snapped Lord Alastare.

"Then, listen. Girls are, by nature, hero-worshipers—this being, you know, a speech about girls. There is much nonsense abroad to the effect that there exists such a person as a 'modern girl,' who does this and that and will say thus and thus. Disbelieve it, Lord Alastare. Girlhood is an ancient situation, it is exalted by ancient joys, it suffers ancient passions, it reacts to ancient words. There is no 'modern girl,' except in the minds of certain silly people who find an outlet for their own lewdness in ascribing it to other people. Of course, there are fashions; but fashions, as you brilliantly remarked, sir, change."

"And what, sir, is the point of all this?"

"You have none of the servile qualities, Lord Alastare, not even patience. The point is that no girl, ancient or modern, will cease to love because of any of the ordinary accusations you can bring against her man. There is only one which will destroy her love. You may call her man a cad, and she will smile, and if you repeat it, she will get bored. He may be a burglar, but she won't cease to love him. A poisoner, and she may still love him. A coward, and she may not despise him. A card-sharper, and she may excuse him. But prove that man capable of a deep disloyalty, and at that moment her love will be as distant as your youth, Lord Alastare, and as dead as mine. Disloyalty is the only bedfellow love will certainly reject. Will you call your daughter in, Mrs. Alastare, and I will tell her a story."

"Call her, Eleanour," said Lord Alastare. "I should think Mr. Maturin will have no difficulty in persuading her of his ineligibility on those grounds."

"True," said Mr. Maturin. "True."

NOW, the occasion is complete; the parts of the comedy are filled; the persons of the play bear themselves with becoming suspense; and the scene is richly set with restraint, as is proper to the true spirit of comedy.

The faint grandeur of distress, the lofty silence of disdain—there is the girl's mother, in her shadowed chair, and my lord Viscount Alastare, at his writing-table, the light of the one shaded lamp laying a rich gloss on his thick white hair.

The indifference that masks an assured emotion, the mockery, the gravity and the cunning candor of love—there is Nancy Alastare, coiled in a chair near her mother, a girl dark-haired and white-faced, with cool eyes that dare you to surprise in them any secret that she will not, in her own time, thoughtfully and completely give up to you.

Mr. Maturin, handsome Mr. Maturin, is talking. He generally is. A talkative man, let's face it.

"Nancy," he addressed the girl's eyes, "your mother and your grandfather have quite properly objected to our engagement; further, they have forbidden it, but are not, unfortunately for their authority, in a position to prevent it. Now, Nancy, we have had quite a long conversation in here, a little about you, but considerably more about me. That I am as God made me is a truth Lord Alastare will not recognize. He thinks I am a good deal worse. That I am in love, your mother is unkind enough to doubt. She thinks I am suffering from a physical distemper. You and I, however, know differently; we have, if I may quote Mr. Leslie Henson, seen the program. And so, just as you were not swayed by your guardian's arguments today, I have not been swayed by them tonight—"

"How, sir!" said Lord Alastare hotly. "Are you—"

"I am talking, Lord Alastare. But, Nancy," continued Mr. Maturin, with that half-smile of his, "they insisted that I could cure you of your attachment to me, if I wished. I pointed out that I had already put myself before you as a man whose character contained certain flaws, and whose life was comparable only to a Gruyère cheese in the many gaps and fissures that blotted its surface; and that you had, while deploring my recent bankruptcy and my only too frequent divorces from the strait path, chosen to believe that there is an end to all things, even to a man's folly, and had therefore remained by your decision to become my wife. Your mother and grandfather, however, dared me to tell you the truth about myself, and yet hold you. Did I think for one moment, Nancy, that I would lose you in this way, I frankly admit," said Mr. Maturin, "that I would not put my hand to any such quixotic folly—"

"After all," said Nancy Alastare, "the past is dead."

"My point exactly, Nancy. And that is why," said Mr. Maturin softly, "if only to satisfy your mother and grandfather of the inevitability of your choice, and of my complete faith in you, I have decided to do what I will do. Listen, Nancy—"

Lord Alastare's voice interrupted like an ax:

"You live up to my description of you completely, Mr. Maturin. You are indeed the ace of cads. For now you are betraying your word of a few minutes ago."

"I do wish you wouldn't interrupt," said Mr. Maturin warmly. "I am embarked on a suspension bridge of very doubtful strength, and you keep on throwing nasty remarks at me. . . . My tale, Nancy," he continued into the middle air, and spoke from this moment with his eyes fixed absently in the shadows of the books on the shelves opposite, "my tale, Nancy, has to do with many years ago. Now I have done and been many things in my time; I am one of those men of whom it is said, 'He could write a book about his life'—which of course means that I have done everything in my life except write a book.

"At that time I was a subaltern in a Guards regiment, a mode of life which bored me in the extreme; but as the small, but not too small, allowance my father gave me was contingent on my retaining my commission, I endured in patience, the while I gave myself heartily up to the pleasures of the town. Nor did I have any difficulty in amusing myself, for the truth compels me to confess, Nancy, that I must then have been a very handsome boy, as boys go, and much more amusing than most at all hours of the day and night.

"IN MY battalion I had one very great friend. He was a man who had everything I had not: a simple frankness, a plain but almost painfully honest bearing, and a heart like gold; which was then, as you know, rather more evidently in circulation than it is now. I cannot imagine how a boy like that could have loved and admired me; but he undoubtedly did to a singular degree, so that I was frequently enabled to borrow money from him almost painlessly, for he was heir to a great fortune, with which went a great name; though, indeed, he was often as hard put to it as I was to fit a morsel of caviar to a piece of toast, for his father had ideas about allowances quite contrary to ours.

"He became engaged to a very beautiful girl. What she saw in my friend, I do not know. Women are odd. That she loved him, I was instantly certain. Even my cynicism could not ascribe to her the mean calculation of a title-fortune-hunter. That he loved her, madly and completely, he made clear to me in those broken and inarticulate periods that are the hall-mark of all honest Englishmen in love; a failure to achieve which, together with a proficiency in French, is said to lay the character of any Englishman open to grave suspicion.

"We were at that time in the barracks near Sloane Square: my friend and I in adjacent rooms. I was passing through a financial void; and so, with that resignation which, let's face it, has been my one consistent virtue, I would go early to bed.

"Night after night my friend would come in late, after having been to the play or a ball with his fiancée, and night after night, as he prepared himself for bed in the adjoining room, he would softly whistle a tune. Thus, you understand, he expressed his happiness; and killed it.

"Maybe I would not have minded so much if he had not whistled the same tune every night; maybe I would not have minded at all if it had not been a tune especially antipathetic to me. It was Mendelssohn's 'Spring Song'; and I have already told you, Lord Alastare," said Mr. Maturin with a glance at the old gentleman, who was listening with every mark of attention, though not of approval, "how my distaste for that composition led me for the second time to a hasty action. But what I did at the time I speak of was not done hastily.

"One day I borrowed a sum of money from my friend. He, poor man, was so absorbed in his happiness that he scarcely observed the third zero which, having seen how readily he had attached two, I persuaded him to attach to the primary numeral on the check; and then, with his full permission, and money, I made myself pleasant to his fiancée.

"He trusted me implicitly, that boy; and the tale of the subtleties and ramifications of the affair would bore you, how I used every art on the girl, how she came to believe in my love for her—I believed in it too, I must say—how she came to look wearily on the plain but honest face of her fiancé, how she came to suffer his inarticulate periods with a doubtful smile; and how, finally—though he had long ceased to whistle Mendelssohn's 'Spring Song'—she broke her engagement to him; and would have been my wife, but that (*a*) I was at about that time expelled from the Brigade, and (*b*) I was never, until lately, a marrying man. That is all: and, I think," said Mr. Maturin softly, looking round at the chair which had until a moment before been occupied by the figure of Nancy Alastare, "quite enough."

Lord Alastare was silent; his thin hands clasped together on the surface of the writing-table, he stared fixedly at a point on the carpet. Mrs. Alastare was silent.

Mr. Maturin looked from one to the other, and he did not smile at all; then he looked for a while at the points of his patent-leather shoes.

"Well," said he at last, "good night." And he strode toward the door, which lay in shadow.

Lord Alastare turned his head.

"Good night, Mr. Maturin," he said gravely. "Thank you."

"Not at all," said the tall shadow by the door. "Perhaps it is for the best, like this. Oh, by the way"—Mr. Maturin just touched the outside of his breast pocket—"I will, if you don't mind, keep this bank note. Your house owes it to me. Good night, Mrs. Alastare." And the door closed softly on Mr. Maturin. Through the silence of the house the two heard his steps on the flags of the hall: the closing of the front door; the faint echo of his passage down the square.

LORD ALASTARE stared bemused at the still and distant figure of his daughter-in-law.

"What did he mean, Eleanour, by that last remark—that our house owed him that money?"

Mrs. Alastare laughed, and the old gentleman jumped up with the shock.

"Eleanour!"

"Didn't you say, dear, that Capel Maturin was the ace of cads?"

"Well, he has certainly proved himself that."

"Has he!" Mrs. Alastare laughed again, the sort of laugh that people have been killed for. "No, dear, he hasn't. All he has proved is that I am the queen of cads."

"Eleanour, what is this nonsense!"

"Of course," said Mrs. Alastare thoughtfully, "there was an excuse for your son, Basil. I made it rather easy for him. You see, dear, Capel Maturin lied. As usual, you might say. Well, yes. He just told the story the wrong way round. I was engaged to be married to Capel Maturin. He introduced me to his best friend, Basil Alastare. You gave your son a very small allowance, you know. To be able to seduce his best friend's fiancée he needed money. As Capel Maturin had done very well on the Derby that year, your son borrowed a thousand of him; and Capel Maturin, who used to whistle the 'Spring Song'—that's why he so hated it later—because he and I both loved it, suddenly found one day that I preferred Basil Alastare's prospects to his own presence. I don't suppose you realize, dear, the exquisite revenge that Mr. Maturin has had of me. He intended obviously to marry my daughter; how could I have borne that? But I could have borne it better than the memory of tonight. Here I have sat, a faded woman, while Capel Maturin, having won my daughter's love, killed it out of pity for you with a tale which, however he had told it, does me very little honor; and, for pity's sake, he spared you your son. Good night, dear. Don't look so sad. After all, you and your son have had what you wanted of my daughter and me. And the ace of cads hasn't. Good night, dear."

A Novel Complete in This Issue

The Happy Despot

A Hen-Pecked Sultan, an American Suffragette Sultana, an Up-and-Coming Reporter—and It All Takes Place in Africa

By Reginald Wright Kauffman

Illustrations by O. J. Gatter

THE Kansas reporter's sharp blue eyes involuntarily betrayed his astonished horror.

"Kidnaped? Kidnaped? *Est-ce qu'il a été enlevé?*"

"As the least of his servants," said Hassan, "has dared to inform the Magnificence."

"Kidnaped by order of a Sultan?"

Turbaned Hassan bowed imperturbable assent.

"An American citizen!"

The Amanian Arab's regard for his employer's emotions had limits. This time he merely shrugged.

Something in that European movement of those oriental shoulders recalled Charley to his rule against every revelation of surprise. He shifted his gaze and calmly swept the shabby public square of this outpost of what ought to be modern Greece.

"Old Doc McReynolds," he mused, "the pride of my home county and one of the finest flowers of the Sunflower State!" Then, engulfing human sympathy and inherent patriotism, the professional element of the news swept over him. "It's the biggest story since Perdicaris—and it's all my own!" Rapture flushed his freckled cheeks. "Let's go!"

He violated local tradition by crossing the street at a run.

The only cable station on the historic island of Petros is that of the Compagnie Méditerranée, here in Petropolis, beside the Mosque of Ibrahim, at the corner of Aristides Hodos and the Avenue of St. Andrew of Crete—and it is no place for a nervous American. A grimy counter halves it, a rampart behind which the single operator, a Greek, may defy his most imperative patron *ex abundanti cantela*. When Charley Buckwalter arrived, the operator had just occupied the trench—it was but 10:30 A.M.

"The wire she is still asleep," persisted the telegraphist.

Charley pulled his straw hat toward his uptilted nose. It was an aggressive hat, bound with the vermilion-and-violet of Wufford University, which he had never attended. He spoke American:

"Asleep? So are you. So's the whole burg. And I'm here to fire the morning gun and sound the cheerful reveille."

The bearded Hassan, whom he had acquired at Cape Krio, nodded approval; this Amanian understood no English.

"*Sir gasoor mithel-e-sebas wa shatar mitel el warvel,*" said he.

It was the one sentence of Arabic that Charley knew, and he knew it because it was perpetually on the lips of his guide: "Be fearless as a lion and clever as a jackal."

"You said it," grinned the Kansan. He shook a half-serious right fist under the operator's chin, while his left slipped a liberal note of the Ionian Bank into the clerk's ready palm. "Never mind the

Copyright, 1924, by R. W. Kauffman

change, Mercury; just blow the factory whistle and get that message off right away *tacheos*."

It was written on one of the company's forms and read:

Higgins, *Globe*.
Lumleyville, Kansas.

Professor in Bir-Wadan Amana stop can't trust wires with details but chance for national scoop starting tonight stop cable pronto thousand stop dollars not francs this trip you tightwad.

BUCKWALTER.

"I'll be at the Restaurant Athena," said Charley, "off and on all day. Have you got a poorhouse in Petropolis?"

The Greek didn't know what a poorhouse was.

"Lucky man! Anybody can tell you don't own an automobile. Well, a poorhouse is an *oikia* for the *cherokopoi*—the refuge of the busted—and unless you have a thousand bucks for me by the twilight hour, I'll be going over the hill to it. But, oh, you'll have 'em!" He cast ecstatic eyes to the cobwebbed ceiling. "This'll pull the last bunch of straw from under the Hollidaysburg *Gazette's* boiled shirt. I can see Ben Higgins when Tim Fogerty brings him the flimsy. A thousand? Here, gimme that back a minute—it's good for *two* thousand!"

He made the correction, shoved his hat up to a spot nearer its proper place on his rebellious red hair and led the unwilling Hassan on an aimless tour of the gray old town.

"But why should the Light of the Morning walk," asked Hassan, "when there are chairs at five paras apiece upon which he may repose himself?"

The Arab spoke a Marseillaise French of oriental phraseology. Charley was master of a patois of the same tongue, high-school in accent, but hair-raising in fluency.

"This particular light of the morning," said Charley, "doesn't repose himself till he's tired—and if things keep on the way they're going at last, he'll not be tired till the local room sends a wreath, and the owner places a couple of sago-palm fronds on the casket. My friend, we may never pass this way again; I hope we don't—it's as mummified as King Tut—but, *cloches d'enfer*, I mustn't miss anything!"

Mr. Charles J. Buckwalter seldom did. He was short, lithe and quick. He was twenty-three years old and accounted any younger man an infant and any older a Methuselah. He was the star reporter on the Lumleyville *Globe* and dressed that way. He was at large in the Mediterranean because of the war in Pottawatomie County, Kansas.

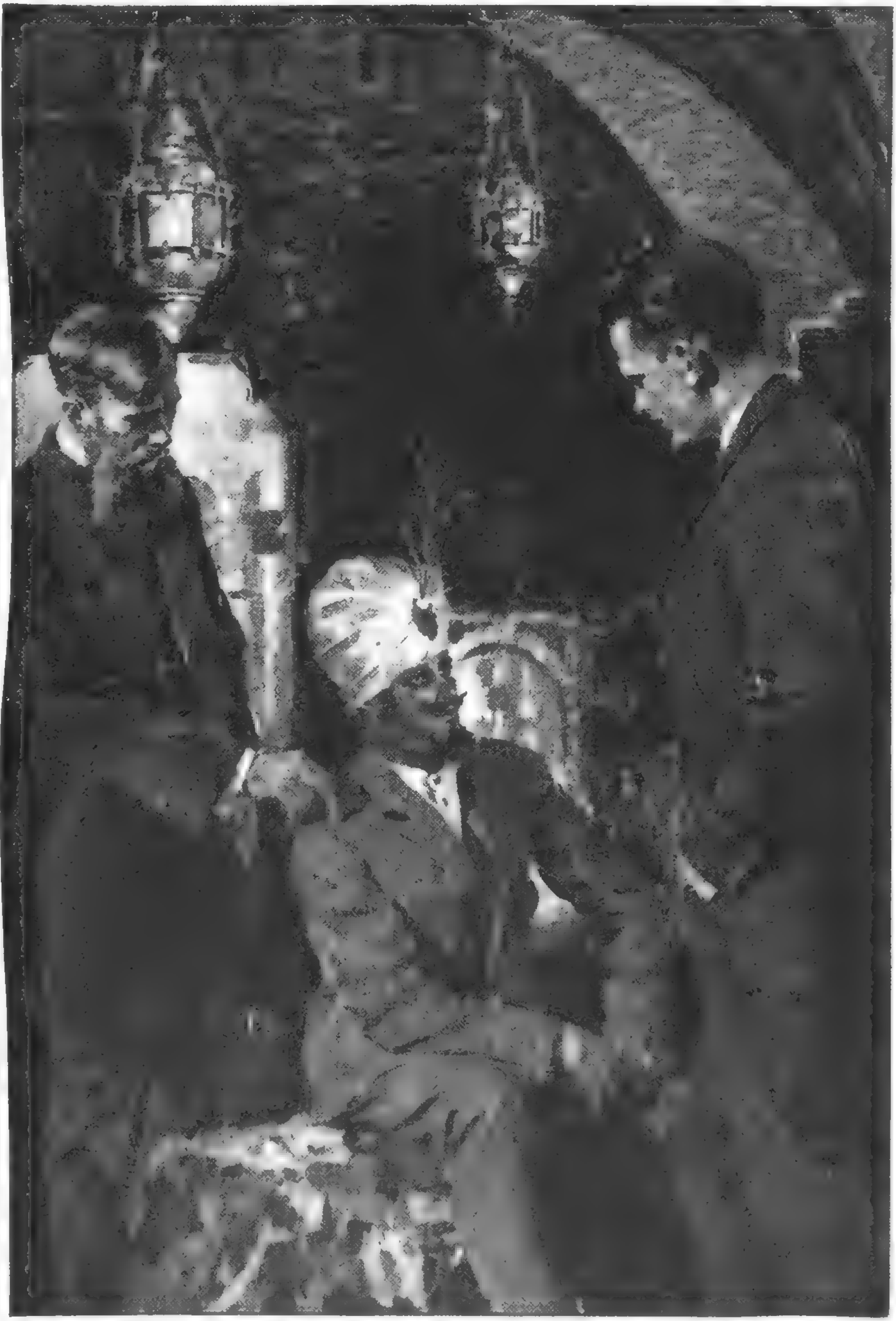
"LUMLEYVILLE," he explained to Hassan as they passed the ruins of the Temple of Hera in the Hagios Nikolas Strados, "hasn't more than 32,000 population, but it's *quelque ville*, and the Lumleyville *Globe* has the Hollidaysburg *Gazette* shoved into the Big Blue River and yelling for the life guards."

"May Allah drown it," antiphonated the pious Amanian.

When ignorant of the argot for a desired flourish of his native slang, Mr. Buckwalter either translated literally or else pronounced the American phrase with what he considered a Gallic lilt; and when he wanted to be unintelligible, he dropped without pause into his western vernacular. He did not believe in letting an employee know too much, but he had a partiality for his own tongue.

The *Globe*, he now went on, was owned by a broad-minded gentleman and edited by an up-to-date journalist, whereas the *Gazette* was the organ of an oppressive capitalist and conducted by a brigand. Not content with its A.P. franchise and supremacy among its legitimate clientele—the 50,000 inhabitants of Hollidaysburg—the unethical *Gazette* had attempted an invasion of Lumleyville. This the *Globe* met heroically, and it won its first great battle at Blaine when Marshal Foch passed through there on his way from St. Joe.

"Every sheet in three counties had its man out to interview him, and the *Gazette* had two—its crack stenog and a feature guy specially imported from some Kansas City rag. They all had everything but one thing; that was the French language, Hassan—the French language of that outfit was the exclusive property of C.J.B. When the Marshal heard my French, he hadn't a half-second's time for anybody else. He told me he loved to listen to me, and so he talked it back, and I was the only one that could understand him for all the five minutes he was there. *Parlez* about a scoop—I scooped the whole of Pottawatomie, Riley and Jackson counties!"



To Charley, the Sultan said: "You are quite mistaken. There is no American prisoner anywhere in Amana."

"God be praised!" chanted Hassan, wearily eying some sidewalk chairs.

"And then," Charley concluded, "this Hollidaysburg *Gazette* had the nerve to offer me a job at double what I was pulling down in the *Globe*. 'S if I'd work for the *Gazette* at any price!"

Mr. Buckwalter's French had, indeed, made an impression. The *Globe's* owner was among the first Kansans to believe that the United States should play an active part in world politics; on a night of enthusiasm for that faith he designed, with Higgins, a state-wide syndicate for Buckwalter's articles (the *Gazette* was not invited to subscribe), and sent his star to the Lausanne Conference.

What Charley did not communicate to Hassan was that people back home soon ceased to care whether Eastern Thrace remained Christian or was ceded to Turkey, and that the correspondent, loath to return defeated, remained in Europe only through the discovery that Dr. Cyrus G. McReynolds, of Pottawatomie's own Wufford University, was conducting interesting archeological excavations in Petros. Charley was grudgingly allowed another fortnight and a few thousand French francs to get this story and bring it back to Lumleyville forthwith.

Buckwalter spoke again.

"But you can't keep a squirrel on the ground! I've scored another bull's-eye. Old Ben Higgins knows me, and now I've shot him a hint that'll make him blink. Hassan, he's going to send us across there to Northern Africa"—Charley nodded toward the somber mountains that just disturbed the southern horizon—"to dig the Doc out of your Sultan of Amana's lock-up."

"Us?" wondered Hassan.

"Sure, you too!" Charley clapped the Amanian's white robe at the spot where a shoulder ought to have been. "We've got the story all sewed up! Nobody else can touch it. Don't you see the streamers? First day: 'Eminent Pottawatomie Scientist Kidnaped!' Following stories for a week, if nobody breaks in. And then, 'McReynolds Rescued from Mohammedan Dungeon by *Globe* Reporter.' All the stuff filed at one time, and none till we've pulled off the stunt." In the glory of that provision, Charley wrung his guide's hand. "That old boy kidnaped! It's my first stroke of luck since I kissed good-by to the Statue of Liberty—McReynolds alive or Sidi Yusef dead!"

ONCE the Petros business day had really begun—which is to say when the clock in the west façade of the *Koimesis Metropolitikos* marked eleven A.M.—Mr. Buckwalter's promenade proved anything but aimless. Indeed, his course throughout these preliminaries was laid in accordance with the best traditions of his profession, so that, having cabled for money to procure a certain story, he religiously set about assuring himself that the story was true.

They had reached Petropolis, by fishing smack from Sphakia, at six. Because the tideless sea had been at its worst throughout their voyage, Charley courted his beauty-sleep on one of the chairs before the still shuttered Restaurant Athena, while Hassan sought the announced scene of the professor's archeological labors.

Hassan returned at leisure, with the news that two days since, McReynolds had been seized by a pair of his imported Amanian workmen and conveyed, out of this Turkish isle, to the African mainland. Thence he would be taken across the mountains into Amana, and there be held for ransom. That was a matter of course; the despot over there had never before happened to select an American victim, but he not infrequently spared his subjects the burden of increased taxation, by kidnaping from neighboring territory; the Turks didn't care, if it was not a Turk that suffered.

"I get you," nodded Charley, as he summarized his guide's explanation. "Your Sultan of Amana hands the Sultan of Turkey—or whoever's on top at Constantinople—a rake-off. Sidi Yusef of Amana has got hold of more coin than he can use for himself, and so he's a little short of cash to meet the demands of the public budget. It's an accident likely to happen to the best regulated country. Why don't you folks try the commission form of government?"

So now Mr. Buckwalter went himself to the discontinued excavations and found a few idling former workmen, of whom one spoke enough French to verify Hassan's narrative. Then the American braved the local Turkish officials; he assured himself, as he had hoped to do, that, the kidnaping not having been reported to them, they would report it to nobody.

"Where," he inquired, "is the United States Consulate?"

There was none on the island.

Charley breathed a psalm of thanksgiving. His proclaimed poverty was but relative; like every good reporter, he rarely spent all of one advance from the business office before its successor was at hand; he returned to the cable operator and, to prevent any possible leakage, bribed that gentleman against transmission of the least further word of the scandal. The operator pledged his mother's soul as hostage for his silence.

"He ought to stay bought for a couple of weeks," said Charley, "and if I can't cinch the story by that time, why, anybody's welcome to it." He clapped the Amanian's back. "You may ask, Hassan," he went on, "why I'm not afraid that your tyrant won't spill my beans by demanding the ransom; my brief experience down here has taught me that if everything but death is uncertain, in the Near East everything but death is slow."

They returned at last to the now less somnolent Restaurant Athena.

"The money can't get here for *beaucoup* hours, but there aren't any movies till evening, and then only western films."

Hassan's dark face lightened a little. "As the Magnificence wills it."

"I guess you're wondering," Buckwalter pursued, "why I don't cable this story of the kidnaping before I start for the rescue. It's because I don't want any wise correspondents running over from Rome till I've cleaned up. That's why I didn't even use the word 'kidnaped' in my query to Ben Higgins. *Maintenant, écoutez à votre Oncle Dudley*, and I'll make a real reporter out of you."

That education lasted well into the afternoon, and whether it was successful or not, Hassan bore it as a man should who is paid to serve. It did not conclude till Charley's eyes, passing beyond the mosque, were again caught by the mysterious mountains of the mainland, and he ceased his lesson for inquiries about the despot of Amana.

"He's the whole works, eh? Machine boss, governor and president, superintendent of schools and presiding elder?"

When this had been amplified, Hassan bowed.

"Isn't bothered by any Congress or Chamber of Deputies?"

"Does the sun require a candle?"

"Secretary of Commerce and Labor, Minister of War and Postmaster General?"

It appeared that there was a Grand Vizier, whose term was for life.

"And suppose the Vizier's not in harmony with the policies of the Administration?"

"Then he gets very sick," said Hassan; "and after he is dead, there is no Vizier."

"Hum! I'm on. Controls the courts."

"His Serene Beneficence Sidi Yusef *is* the courts."

Charley whistled. Of course he'd read of such things, but to be about to see them—that vested them in their first reality.

"Pretty soft. Nothing but a well trained conscience between him and the genuine good time! I bet he's got his conscience eating out of his hand. Think of being able to divorce your wife when she asks you where you were last night! It beats Reno and Paris."

"THE Sultan of Amana," said Hassan reverently, "has twelve wives. There are the eleven Jewels of Amana, and there is the Little Flower whom he is to marry in the month of Shaban—but to speak of her, it is forbidden."

"The perfect despot!" Charley chortled delightedly. "He's got more power than Governor Allen ever had, and he has a better time than Bill White. What more could man ask? If anything beats the job of prominent citizen in Kansas, it must be holding down the throne of Amana." Nevertheless, Buckwalter possessed the journalistic mind; he was counting on his fingers. "Not afraid of the unlucky number, eh? But look here; eleven plus a fiancée doesn't make a dozen. You say he hasn't copped the Little Flower yet, but you talked about twelve. You're one shy, Hassan. Chip in."

Hassan looked troubled, but he had a certain fondness for this strange, yet liberal, employer. "It is also forbidden to speak of her Magnificence. She is the Secret Wife, the real Sultan, the ruler of the harem and of the palace—men of evil tongue say of the court and country, too. She is a woman of your nation."

Charley Buckwalter pushed back his chair so violently that he upset some of the food recently placed upon the table. No rule of professional ethics could bridle that surprise.

"What! An American? An American boss-Sultana and Pride of the Harem and—and—" He clapped his forehead. "Oh, this'll fix the Hollidaysburg *Gazette!* This expedition's going to be the biggest story that ever—" He clutched his Amanian. "Hassan, tell me—"

A long cry interrupted him. It came from the minaret of the Mosque of Ibrahim and was the Mussulman's call to prayer. Hassan drew himself free, walked to the street, faced the east and bowed his forehead to the ground.

Across his bent white back, Charley's bulging eyes caught sight of the cable operator. He was standing in his doorway, and waving a piece of paper in Buckwalter's direction.

"Drama to the curtain's drop!" laughed Charley. He was as near hysteria as he could ever reach. "Here's good old Ben Higgins coming across at the psychological moment with the yellow coin and a God-speed."

As if at leapfrog, he vaulted the praying Arab and reached the office. Tearing the message from the operator's hand, he read:

Buckwalter,
Petropolis.
Professor's excavations not worth it stop use what money on hand to come home immediately.
Higgins.

The great journalist hadn't seen between the lines, after all. Worse than that, he hadn't trusted the news sense of C.J.B.

Staggering as was the blow, Charley, though with shaking hand, dashed off his reply:

Higgins, *Globe*,
Lumleyville, Kansas.
None of your money left stop remaining on own savings stop you and your paper hereby discharged.
Buckwalter.

He ran into the street and shook the rising Hassan.

"Come on. We're going to find a boat for the African coast. I've fired that water-tank sheet and its rube editor. I'm going to get this story and the Professor and the Pride of the Harem, and sell the lot to a real newspaper. I'm going to sell to the Hollidaysburg *Gazette.* It knows news and a Grade A Certified Reporter when it sees 'em."

For three days their Anafi camels had minced along with swaying heads and undulating shoulders.

"I'm slowly getting used to it," said Charley, "but just the same I'd like to take your highway commissioners to Kansas and show 'em what a road ought to be. I wasn't half as seasick on the big pond as I've been on this hairy schooner." He paused for reflection, pushing back the pith helmet by which the straw hat had been grudgingly replaced. "And I think," he added, "that these ships of the desert smell worse than bilge. It's different, of course, but it's more penetrating."

FROM almost directly overhead, a blistering sun dangled its red furnace. Sand, bright as polished silver and white as that beside a living ocean, curved in and out through the lush vegetation with all the compactness of construction and whimsy of design distinguishing a country-house driveway. Not a breath of air moved in the trees, and the bare rocks became unintelligible heliographs. The riders' shadows momentarily shortened; those of the luxuriant plant life were as distinctly outlined as the objects that cast them. A district that man has crossed and recrossed since his earliest migratory existence, the land lay as clean as on the morning God willed it to being.

The invisible road was much traveled. Pushing on at their best speed, the adventurers brought up with and passed merchants from Alexandria and caravans from Dernah. They were, however, unaccompanied when they topped an ultimate ridge and looked down into the cup out of which climbs, up the western mountain-side, the old city of Bir-Wadan, the capital of Amana.

Like the waters of a lake, the sands washed right to its brown walls, and behind these sprang a clutter of mosques and minarets and white, flat-roofed houses, shaded by date palms and bound about by streets narrow and fortuitously winding. A dozen lazy birds of prey, scavengers, hung in the still air over the town, and from its huddled bazar rose, even to the distant travelers' ears, the insistent clatter of mongrel dogs.

"Bir-Wadan," mused Charley. "I wonder if there's an honest promise in the way that first syllable's pronounced." He pointed to a mass of buildings half-way up the mountain-side and at least a mile from the west wall. "What's that? Seems to me I've seen a photo of it in some Sunday supplement."

It was a huge estate immured like a fortress and built like a pleasure park. There was a mass of high towers and low rambling palaces, flashing façades and marble domes. It embraced vast lawns, formal gardens and one considerable forest. Here a slim finger of masonry leaped toward heaven; there, surrounded by a peristyle, lay a court in which gigantic fountains played. It was, as Hassan reverently informed Buckwalter, Tarzut-el-Lakkaz, the hereditary residence of the Sultans of Amana.

The travelers came to the famous spiked east gate of Bir-Wadan, periodically adorned with the heads of its master's enemies—ten, and sometimes twenty, together—and Hassan obtained admission by a torrent of Hamitic explanation that sounded like Hebrew invective. They reached an inn, and as Charley expressed it, checked their camels in the cloak room. And then the astounding guide announced that he would like his wages to date, since he must now surrender his commission.

"What's your grievance?" asked Charley serenely, but under knitted brows.

Grievance? Hassan's happiness in his present situation could not be equaled until he reached the Prophet's seventh heaven and heard its seventy thousand languages. He called on the cobbled flagstones of the inn courtyard to witness it.

"But you're going to quit?"

The Arab nodded his white-swathed head. If the Magnificence graciously permitted, quitting was precisely his intention.

"Then, man, what's wrong?"

Hassan replied with much blandiloquence in an oration that occupied a full half-hour, exhausted the figures of rhetoric and amounted to just this: Torn between love of country and love of Buckwalter, aware of Charley's purpose and loath to impede it, yet loyal to the Sultan of Amana and forbidden active tampering with that despot's desires, he could but retire from the unequal contest. He concluded with a shivery peroration that succinctly warned Charley to imitate his example rather than, by proceeding, brave a thousand deaths.

"Don't worry about me," Buckwalter shortly expostulated.

But Hassan did:

"Has not the servant of your Magnificence been for forty years born slave to the Lord of the Earth and his predecessor, and should he not know that to cross this supernal Sultan's will is to give the bread and salt of welcome to Azrael? Truly"—he beat his breast—"in the American savant's detention are influences too mighty for common men."

"THE sooner you give the boot to the idea that a live reporter's a common man," said Charley, lighting a cigarette, "why, the quicker you'll understand the palladium of our liberties, old bean. Your thousand deaths leave me at ten degrees below. I just call your attention to the fact that you didn't mention 'em before."

Before, the shrugging Hassan reminded him, there was plenty of time, but now were they not within the walls of Bir-Wadan? "I know whereof I speak, because it was my own mother's other son that stole the graybeard."

"You mean"—Charley blew a cool puff of smoke—"that it was a brother of yours who pulled off this kidnaping?"

"So my humble inquiries at Petros informed your servant. My brother is high in the secrets of Tarzut-el-Lakkaz."

"That settles it." The thing smelled too strongly of duplicity. "When a man wants to quit, he can't go too soon. What do I owe you?"

Recurrent warnings, continued pleadings, Charley would not hear. He paid off his guide, who bade him farewell with a sad "*Sir gasoor mithel-e-sebas wa shatar mitel el warvel.*" Then Buckwalter turned on his heel and went upon a reconnaissance of the city.

He plunged into precipitous streets so narrow that the striped awnings touched overhead, and so winding that after five hundred yards of them he despaired of an unassisted return. Everything had been as it was for centuries, yet nothing was as it had been intended. The booths of trade grew like fungi on the moldering walls of ruined palaces; a coffee house rose out of a forgotten castle's stone-heap; what was now a mosque still flung upward the four bell-shaped towers that proclaimed it as a pre-Moslem outpost of Byzantium.

"What this town needs," thought Charley, "is a Wamego mayor, a Topeka health commissioner and a Wichita police force."

The mental envisagement of those familiar names brought with it a pang of nostalgia, yet he throttled it by the fingers of ambition. He was absolutely alone in a city alien to the least of his mental processes, yet he wouldn't care. No mission could have seemed more hopeless than his, yet he was certain of success. Buckwalter belonged to the inspirational school of journalism; he had no plans, but he possessed a perfect faith that something would turn up—and it did.

It turned up in the shape of a treacherously topheavy and desperately pitching closed carriage of European eighteenth-century design, which, pulled over the cobblestones by four murderous horses, rounded a corner high above him and came pellmell down the steep alley. The driver yelled in his high seat and was all but tumbled from it. Outdistanced outriders galloped after, flinging their carbines in air. The coach careened, threatening death to whomever it bore and whatever it descended upon.

Ahead of Charley the crowd melted shrieking into invisible recesses. Behind him a party of men pressed forward as if in attack. Buckwalter ran on, leaped for a flying rein, seized it, brought the racing animals to their knees, and was tossed aside directly opposite the carriage's wide-swung door.

Out of the door something jumped into his instinctively opened arms. It was something bundled in wrappings of white; it was something from which a yashmak fell away, revealing the pale face of a beautiful girl, whose dewy lips were as red as the hibiscus and whose eyes were big and languorous and black as a sloe's.

She spoke as deliberately as if they were being introduced at a tea. The words had the sound of dripping water, and they were French:

"It is you? You have come to save me?"

"*Je vais le dire au monde!*" cried Charley.

Then the men that had run behind him arrived from below, and the chasing outriders galloped from above. A pistol spat. Horses reared.

He pressed the gently breathing girl to his breast and staggered upright. One of her servants—or were they her pursuers?—swung his carbine butt, and Buckwalter crumpled, with his burden, to the street.

HEADACHE. . . . Darkness . . . shot through by sparks. . . . More headache. . . . There was never such a headache. Grateful for a cool stone at the back of his neck . . . and that the stone was damp. . . . Headache! . . .

Charley's return to consciousness was painful—so painful that he tried to prevent it. The odor of age clogged his nostrils. He put out a hand and touched a bedewed stone flooring—living rock. He felt of his clothes; they were wet. Somewhere near by, water dripped monotonously. His head beat in unison with it. These Amanians were hard hitters.

Hitters—Amanians. Now he remembered everything.

He considered. He was a reporter, a Kansan, a romanticist—as yet, in the order named:

First, the news: He would free McReynolds and get his story to the Hollidaysburg *Gazette*, if he had to bite his way through these walls with his corn-trained teeth.

Second, his plight: There must be a stop put to these outrages on the part of a two-by-four infidel despotism against Christian citizens of the globe's greatest republic, and C.J.B. was the man for the job. No American Ambassador was accredited to Bir-Wadan, but there was that cross between a low-grade Minister and a high-grade Consul ambiguously entitled "Diplomatic Agent." Buckwalter would shelter his news-story from international complications until it was safe on the Algiers cable, and then he would come back here and blow up.

And thirdly, that sloe-eyed girl: He'd promised to save her, and he would. She wanted to run away from something; it was, apparently, by making show of helping her that he had got himself into this dungeon. She was probably the wife of some political boss; she—

Great Grimshaw! She'd spoken French, but that was because the French were about the only plentiful foreigners in Amana, and he looked foreign. Of course, she must be the American Sultana, that Queen of the Harem, of whom Hassan had darkly hinted. In her heart, she must loathe her position. Charley hated to think of her as married, but after all, her husband was so much married that she was hardly a wife. He had the fitting phrase for his news cable:

"A bird in a gilded cage."

Well, Charles J. Buckwalter would open the door.

A scraping lock rasped. Heavy hinges creaked. Light came in, turbaned figures silhouetted against it, and the knock-down scent of green Oman tobacco.

Somebody asked him a smooth-voiced question in the always monosyllabled Hamitic:

"*Sir gasoor mithel-e-sebas*"—Charley sat up to his only Arabic—"*wa shatar mitel el warvel.*"

He dropped gently into his private Gallic: "*Oui, nous n'avons pas de bananes ce matin!*"

The tallest of the silhouettes—very lank, very tall—advanced, a lantern in hand. As he drew near, it showed him to be an officer—a cavalry captain, had his insignia been intelligible to the prisoner. It showed him also bearded and red-lipped, and possessed of features the cast of which recalled Buckwalter's late cicerone.

"In Bir-Wadạn," said the captain, "there cannot be two men who speak that French of the United States Military Intelligence; you are the strange American whom my misbegotten brother brought into Amana."

CHARLEY rose to his feet. His head still ached, and he was stiff. "So it was Hassan who blew on me!"

"He said only that you were here and that you spoke thus. Anything that *you* may have to say, you must say elsewhere. His Majesty the Sultan has summoned you."

They climbed, to reach the earth's surface, a stairway quite fifty feet in height and little better than a ladder. The captain led the way through a tangle of corridors, high-vaulted halls with arabesque arches, passages in which their footsteps woke antagonistic echoes—empty, save for the recurrence of living statues at unexpected intervals; bronze giants, negroes naked of all except loin-cloths and presenting, as the party passed, long scimitars that had never known a sheath.

"We'd censor those in any American state capitol," thought Charley.

After one glance, he kept his blue eyes assiduously averted from them until he was brought up before two more. They stood with their backs to a curtain of crimson plush which they drew away. Behind towered four others of the Nubian Guard, a pair on either side of a studded door.

"Are we coming to the parlor?" asked Charley.

"Beyond," the captain answered, "is the room in which his Majesty will judge you. He wishes to see you alone, because you are an American. But *we* shall be within his call."

They opened the door, pushed him in, and closed the door behind him.

He faced what, for height and paucity of furniture, might have been a section of the halls that he had just been traversing. The curved ceiling was all mosaic, one enormous rug of ankle-deep ply covered two-thirds of the floor, and around the bare walls extended a low divan.

Leaning against one of the few windows and looking out upon a grassy court, was a short, stout man, eating chocolate buds from a small paper bag. He wore a turban and a brown tweed suit and a pair of patent-leather pumps. His back was toward Buckwalter, but Charley could see that the pumps were worn for ease; they were badly cracked by usage and had been sliced here and there to relieve bunions.

"Will you tell me," Charley respectfully inquired, "where I can find the Sultan?" He was nervous and forgetful; he used English.

The fat man turned.

He wore a scanty Vandyke beard as if it were a grudged concession to his religion; his cheeks were round and swarthy. Bluish pouches hung beneath eyes that were the weariest, the most lackluster, that the Kansan had ever seen. He put plump fingers to his beard; the fingers shook, and so their dull rings flashed feebly.

"I am the Sultan."

He spoke as one tired beyond interest even in himself, but he spoke the English of Oxford. Charley was in the presence of Sidi Yusef, the twenty-fifth despot of his line on the throne of Amana.

TO THE roots of his brick-red hair, Charley's freckled face blushed an honest crimson. This was his first encounter with a monarch, and he, who loved to believe that perception, presence of mind and ease of manner were among his leading characteristics, had botched it!

"Oh!" he said. "I didn't know *you* were the Sultan. Excuse me."

Sidi Yusef's heavy eyes considered him heavily.

"I'm told you are not an Englishman, and your accent does rather confirm that, you know—eh, what?"

"No, *sir*. I'm American."

"Ah!" The Sultan took a chocolate bud; Charley had the impression that in some lurid way Sidi Yusef disliked the United States. "What part do you come from?"

This wouldn't do. "The best part—the Sunflower State—Kansas."

His Majesty's trembling fingers plucked again at that religious beard, and Charley remembered the captive professor. Moreover, the mention of that state name steadied him, inspired him: "You couldn't help having heard of Kansas, sir?"

"I dare say," said the Sultan, yet he dared say it only very slowly. "How—exactly how long since did you leave Kansas, Mr.—er—Mr.—eh, what?"

"Buckwalter," said Charley, promptly. "Ten years ago, last April."

"Hum! A decade is quite some time, isn't it? Well, now, I expect we must come to business. I hate this sort of thing, you know, but after all it *is* one of my duties."

He straightened himself. The weariness vanished; the full lips tightened; even the Sultan's eyes became the eyes of a Sultan.

It reminded Charley of his own status. He was a prisoner in a tyrant's palace, and yet he experienced again the pang of envy for a man so happily placed as was this monarch. A despot, who could administer what punishment he chose, and to whose whim no pleasure was denied; it wasn't right, but it must be wonderful.

"You are accused," said the Sultan, "of knowingly aiding and abetting a long-conceived plot against the liberty of a certain lady of our palace. If you are guilty, the penalty is death by the bowstring."

Ninety-seven miles away there was a railroad. From Algiers hard by its wireless station, the submarine cable flashed, in a few seconds, messages to Broadway. Airplanes flew above the scarcely distant Strait of Messina. Just across the mountains, luxurious liners were hurrying American tourists to photograph the Sphinx, or exclaim how dead was the civilization expressed in the Pyramids.

Charley could only gasp.

"Don't half get you!"

The very blankness of his face interpreted his words.

"There was," his Majesty reiterated, "a month-old plot to kidnap a lady—".

"Kidnap!" Buckwalter indignantly interrupted. The eyes once so lackluster peered sharply into Charley's as he went on:

"I came here on some business of my own that I'll explain later. I was giving the town the once over when that runaway ran into me. Of course I tried to stop it, and you ought to be glad I did. A lady fell out, and I caught her. Then some fellows ran up behind me, and some other fellows rode down in front, and the two gangs started a scrap, and what happened to me was only what happens to anybody that gets between the lines—and that's all there is to it."

He paused, stubborn, but anxious to note the effect of his defense. For all his scorn, he was intimately interested in whatever was to follow.

WHAT followed arose outside all the limits of expectation. The Sultan's eyes left his prisoner. Then, as if an electric shock propelled him, he dropped the bag of chocolates. His legs shot under him. He leaped backward and upward. He stood on the divan. He shrieked:

"Take it away! Take it away! *Take it away!*"

His face was tallowy. His eyes bulged. He pointed to a spot behind Buckwalter.

Charley wheeled. Nothing—nothing to alarm anybody! He expected the drawn knife of an assassin; he saw only a pair of greenly yellow orbs and a swaying tail of silver-gray, as there stepped across an opposite window sill a huge Angora cat.

"What—" the American started.

The Sultan jumped up and down on the divan in an ecstasy of fear.

"*Take it away!*"

"That cat?"

"I can't stand them."

The reporter approached the cat; the cat approached the reporter.

"Puss—puss!" said Charley.

"Meow."

The alarmed guard looked in at the door, but Sidi Yusef, distraught though he was, waved them out. The Angora drew nearer Charley's moving fingers. It looked up at him and arched its back and rubbed its long fur against his shins. By the skin behind its neck and above its tail, he lifted it. The cat squawked.

"But don't hurt it!" That was the Sultan's perturbed voice. "It belongs to—to somebody that mustn't be offended. Only get it out of here—get it *out!*"

The incident was over almost immediately. The gorgeous animal, quick to resent indignity, struck at Charley with both teeth and claws, but he took it back to the window and deposited it in the green court where a fountain played.

"Close the window."

Buckwalter obeyed.

When he returned, Sidi Yusef was neither the frightened soul of the moment since, nor yet the patriarchal judge. He had gathered up the fallen bits of foil-wrapped candy and was just the world-weary man in rumpled tweeds.

"I regret," he murmured, "to have had to disturb you. I suffer from—among other ills—the malady one of your great American specialists has written a book about: cat-fear, you know. Nothing else affects my natural courage, but the mere sight of a cat gives me the most awful hump." He proffered the bag. "Have a bud?"

"No, thanks." Charley drew away. That generous hand might be, to all intents and purposes, his executioner.

"They're really not bad. American, too. One of my wives imports them regularly."

"I want to know," said Charley, "what you're going to do about my case, and I warn you that I'm an American cit—"

"Oh!" said the Sultan. "I forgot. So sorry. I'm going to pardon you—eh, what?"

"I'm not guilty—I don't want a pardon; I want an acquittal."

But the Sultan shrugged. "Why quibble?" Deep in those dull eyes, something was brewing. "Besides, this isn't to be an ordinary pardon: it's a—er—provisional. There are affairs that happen in palaces, don't you know, that have to be allowed to happen without it seeming that—that they were allowed to happen. Second hand—third—fourth—eh? I don't pretend you were a party of even the third part. Let us say it merely amuses me to assume you've been very nearly successful in the commission of a crime." Sidi Yusef's voice sank; he smiled sweetly. "Now, my lad, I shall spare your life—provided you don't make a second mistake: Kidnap the Sultana!"

THE Sultan paused. Charley didn't even blink.

"Kidnap the Sultana," Sidi Yusef finally reiterated. "May Allah," he said, "bless you, if you succeed—and if you don't, may the Angel Israfil sing sweetly to your passing soul."

"May I smoke?" asked Charley.

No amazement now: this was a professional matter; here were proffered the facilities necessary for covering his self-imposed assignment. In purely personal crises Buckwalter might occasionally lose calm, but in all affairs of news C.J.B. was the "compleat" journalist. His nerves required only a little tobacco.

"You may sit down," the Sultan said. He indicated a cushion beside him on the divan and, when it was accepted, offered a jeweled case from Bond Street, filled with Virginia cigarettes.

"Thanks," said Charley, shaking his red head. "We grow that export leaf in Kansas, but we've got an anti-cigarette law, so I compromise on Orientals."

He lighted one from a packet bought in Bir-Wădan, and took a few puffs at it. Then he felt quite clear as to the Sultan's game.

Tired of everything, this despot's weariness extended to that radiant creature who had rested an instant in the American's arms! A tyrant's hint is more efficacious than a constitutional monarch's command: some fawning cutthroat had arranged the kidnaping. Then the accident and the rescue by an uninformed guard. In order to shift the onus of failure, the underling had plucked Charley from the scrimmage and accused him to the guards as sole offender—to Sidi Yusef as an incompetent assistant. Hence the need of that mock trial—and now the order from "up top" to try again.

"In Kansas," Buckwalter vocally reflected, "we divorce 'em. Desertion for one year, cruelty, fraud, habitual drunkenness—we've had a bone-dry State for a generation."

"In Amana," said the Sultan sadly, "the one liberty forbidden the monarch is one of the few permitted his subjects; he may marry as often as he pleases; he must not divorce at all. I expect it was thought a bad example, you know. Of course he may kill them."

"Um!" said Charley.

"But," the Sultan resumed, "I was too long at an English university. I don't like to do it. Fact is, I can't. You understand, don't you?"

CHARLEY nodded. Harem murders—women poisoned with sweet pastes—women sewn in bags beside mad cats and dropped by night into sacred rivers; he had heard all those stories, but to come thus close to the actuality was another matter. However, it was business, and it was color for his forthcoming cable dispatch to the *Gazette*.

"The English haven't got any pep," he complained. "I understand they began hunting foxes before the Norman Conquest, and they're still at it. It didn't take us seventy-five years to clean out all the buffalo in the United States. Still, all those Europeans are alike. I stopped off in Pisa and saw that leaning tower—I told the mayor for a ten-per-cent commission I'd get a Topeka contractor who'd straighten the thing in three months without loosening one stone, and I'd guarantee it'd never sink again. Well, that guinea looked at me as if he thought I was crazy."

At Charley the Sultan looked as if he suspected he was being laughed at. However, the blue gaze of the American revealed only ingenuity and determination, so that presently his Majesty said:

"Just so. Whereas you Americans are energetic, eh? Her Highness is American and energetic. I've seen your Far West films in the cinema. It's because of them I'm reposing confidence in you, despite—er—recent events." As if the quality he had mentioned were a garment that he could grasp from conversation, Sidi Yusef put on a surprising briskness. "Only you understand that I must have no knowledge of what transpires."

"*Shatar mitel el warvel,*" said Charley, grinning.

The Sultan rose, and clapped his hands thrice.

A curtain was pushed aside, and a man entered. He had on a frock coat of the sort that preceded cutaways. No Easterner; his scant hair, worn in the ancient bang, was pale and so were his cheeks and lips and his quick, crafty eyes. His full beard was colorless. Charley was presented to M. Paccaud, Sidi Yusef's French Grand Vizier.

"This gentleman"—the Sultan nodded toward Charley—"is my guest. He is to have the freedom of Tarzut-el-Lakkaz."

M. Paccaud raised his pale eyebrows.

"As far as the conventions permit," Sidi Yusef explained. His French was swifter than his English. "You will so instruct the guard. He is to have every attention. He will be housed in the rooms on the Court of the Fountain of Stolen Waters, next the Mosque of Hakim ibn Sina, the Ancestor."

The pale eyebrows nearly encroached upon the pale bangs; M. Paccaud spoke in a voice too silken to be trustworthy, cloyingly sweet, insinuating, cunning.

"That is across the court from the women's quarters, your Highness. Your—"

"Precisely." It was the autocrat that answered through the lips of the world-weary Sidi Yusef.

"I am to gather that—"

"You are. You are also to know that this gentleman is not like your fellow countrymen or my subjects—he is an American." The Sultan turned back to Charley: "Further details will be communicated to you later. Now, my lad."

"Just a minute," said Buckwalter. "I'll try to pull this off for you, but I want one favor."

"You have your life."

"That's a right. I said 'a favor.' You've got another American in the cooler somewhere around here. I want to take Professor McReynolds along home with me."

The royal forehead was troubled by a heavy frown. "McReynolds?"

"Yes, sir, of Wufford University, Kansas. Why, he used to be the Dysartown superintendent of schools!"

Sidi Yusef mutely questioned M. Paccaud. The Grand Vizier answered by a shake of the head.

"This must be *her* work!" gasped the Sultan to his minister. To Charley, he said: "I don't know what put such a fancy into your head, and I don't care to hear.

You are quite mistaken. There is no American prisoner in the palace or anywhere else in Amana."

ON ALL four sides of its Court of the Fountain of Stolen Waters, wandering Tarzut-el-Lakkaz towered in capricious profligacy, a random hodge-podge of architectural hazards, constructed piece by piece through dusty centuries according to the sick fancies of a score or more of kings. Fortifications descended toward the northwest gate of Bir-Wadan and climbed the mountain overhead; battlemented walls, dotted with turrets, zigzagged hither and yon; minarets strove for the sky, and houses rose out of house roofs; but with one exception and the case of his own quarters, no piece of masonry facing that sedulously enclosed square whither Charley had been conducted showed so much as a window. The great palace might look over the city, it might stare at heaven; but of the Court of the Fountain of Stolen Waters it was forbidden a glimpse.

Buckwalter lounged in the portico of the two rooms assigned him. At his left stood the blank rear of the Mosque of Hakim ibn Sina, the Ancestor, the private place of worship of the Sultans of Amana, tall, domed, doubtless rectangular, but with its arcaded entrance facing some other breathing space. In front of him stretched a flagged square, surrounded by a peristyle, with a group of date palms in the center, and among them, a playing fountain and a marble-tiled bathing-pool. Diagonally across the court ran a two-storied building, its ground floor all solid masonry, but having a long balcony above on which a series of green-jalousied casements opened. Actually, there was no sound save the splashing of water, and yet the Kansan's ears seemed to catch, from behind those jalousies, the movement of watching figures, the titter of gossiping tongues; he was looking at the harem of Sidi Yusef.

"He can say what he likes," reflected Mr. Buckwalter; "but he'll never make me believe he hasn't got it pretty easy."

The Sultan had refused to discuss a professor whom he declared nonexistent. He had dismissed Charley with one sharp phrase that was not dulled by its promise of later amplification—and then resumed his chocolates.

"It's perfectly simple," Charley muttered, "perfectly simple, *not!* I've got to find McReynolds and get away with him, for the *Gazette's* sake. And I've got to find this Sultana again and get away with her, for her husband's sake. And if I don't I'm the star performer at a funeral!"

It was late afternoon, and from four o'clock until five in Amana there is generally a recrudescence of heat. That oasis of date palms looked inviting. Charley was starting toward it when something drew his attention back to the women's quarters.

Slashing about with the gray plume of its tail, the Angora cat ran along the balcony at as high a speed as was compatible with dignity. The jalousies of a window rattled. Fleet footsteps sounded, and a girl ran out in pursuit of the animal. No longer swathed by those mummy-wrappings prescribed for a Mohammedan woman when she leaves her house, this was a creature slim and quick and gracile. One glance at her sloe-like eyes and her lips like a hibiscus flower sufficed for her single observer. Charley ran lightly across the court and stood beneath the balcony.

The girl stooped to catch the cat. The cat spat, struck at her and leaped into the square below. The girl stamped her gilt-slippered foot.

"You nasty little beast!"

Looking after the cat, she saw the Kansan.

"Hello!" said Charley.

She was not what he called overdressed, and what she wore was rather diaphanous. She clapped her white hands across her breast.

"Oh!" she cried.

What Charley thought was: "I can't see even a sultan getting tired of her."

He said: "Listen a minute."

"HUSH!" There was now a jeweled finger at her mouth, and in her eyes a fear of something more than his regard of her. "You'll be seen here!" she whispered. "How on earth did you get here?"

"That's all right," said Charley. "I want to talk to you."

"But you mustn't. If they catch you—"

"I must—and they won't."

"Anybody can see you now. If—" She hesitated. "If it were night—"

She was quite right about that. Reluctantly he admitted:

"I'll come back any time you say."

"You can? At twelve, midnight?"

"Sure."

"How?"

"Never mind how. I'll be here with bells on."

"You have a watch?"

He nodded.

She looked at a gold disc on her wrist. "Set yours by mine. It is 4:42." She looked to right and left. "Run now—run. Then, over there, under the date palms at twelve."

She darted through a window, and the balcony was empty.

Empty? Not quite. From it something seemed to float down to him: a perfume very faint, provocative, a perfume of strange roses. Buckwalter actually sighed.

"Well," he answered some admonition of his soul, "she's only one-twelfth of a wife. You can't call *that* married."

Later, his supper finished, Charley remained beside the tabouret, thinking disturbing thoughts, until darkness fell in the Court of the Fountain of Stolen Waters, and a late moon peeped wanly over the highest wall. Every fifteen minutes, certain that an hour had passed, he consulted his watch.

The last time he looked, it was only 11:30. He beat a sharp devil's tattoo on the tabouret.

When his fingers ceased, the noise continued.

He sat up, rigid. An echo? He tapped the table again; a noise followed, but too tardily. He remained silent; the noise went on. It was no blow; it was a gently scraping sound. Its source was on a lower level and somewhere behind the wall that separated Charley's apartments from the Mosque of Hakim ibn Sina.

He tiptoed across the room, and with bare knuckles, tapped once upon the wall. Abruptly the scraping ceased. The journalistic brain of C.J.B. exulted; he had been seeking a prisoner—and here, at dead of night, was stealthy movement underfoot next door. As clearly as if his eyes emitted Roentgen rays, he could see that Professor McReynolds was immured in the crypt of the mosque and trying to tunnel out.

A tremendous stillness had settled over Tarzut-el-Lakkaz. With what distinctness he dared, Charley rapped out a message in Morse:

"McReynolds—Help at hand—Kansan."

There came no answer. Perhaps the professor could not read the code; perhaps the first signal had frightened him away.

Charley passed out of his own apartment to a wide hall. It held a flight of stairs, and up these he groped his way. He was noiseless, but evidently there was no other tenant. He reached the top floor and found the flight of steps that, in most Mohammedan houses, leads to the flat roof.

Below him lay the empty court, only the splash of the fountain breaking its nocturnal silence. Overhead the moon crept timidly into a starry sky. Beside him, some ten feet higher, the wall of the mosque rose darkly. He had remembered that there was no entrance from the Square of the Fountain, but here, directly under a squat tower, was one of a series of windows, evidently designed to give light to the place of worship underneath—ancient windows unprotected by any glass.

His best leap gave his fingers a grip of the sill. Painfully he drew himself up and inside.

Moon and stars helped his vision. He was in a narrow balcony extending around all four sides of the mosque. At his right, a low door stood ajar, giving access, no doubt, to a stair that communicated with the tower. He was about to begin search for the means of descent, when he heard, creeping through the squat doorway to his right, the sound of a not unfamiliar human voice.

It was silken, it was sweet, it was cunning. It dripped like honey from the invisible tower—and it was unmistakably the voice of crafty M. Paccaud, the Grand Vizier of Amana.

BUCKWALTER'S heart leaped, and then seemed to stand still.

The voice from overhead went on, not conversationally, but in monologue. No single word was distinct, yet the effect was that of an officer giving directions or sketching a plan. As it progressed, its monotony dulled alarm; Charley, in his brief career, had too often conquered bugbears to be a coward now, and he regained his self-control and edged toward the little door.

If he was to essay the rescue of the

professor from the crypt, it would not do to leave the Vizier in the tower. What, anyway, could be the purpose of his presence? Even despots do not make jailors of their prime ministers. Besides, this prime minister was not alone; he was talking to somebody up there in that cubby-hole. C.J.B. resolved to investigate.

In the perfect journalist, action is never far to the rear of resolution. The Kansan felt for the knob.

The key was in the lock and on the outside.

There was no means of reaching the tower or leaving it, save through that door upon which the intruder's steady hand securely rested. He had half a mind to lock them up, those folk, and go on about his more pressing business. But he had a greater curiosity to determine what they meant there.

He stopped and edged through the doorway.

INSIDE it was not dark. The light of a lantern filtered from what must be a tiny room above and showed him the base of a winding stair. On assiduous hands and knees, Charley began to mount.

The voice continued. In one of the innumerable courts of Tarzut-el-Lakkaz, a dog howled mournfully.

Buckwalter ascended until his eyes were level with the landing. A second door was there, hanging as improvidently ajar as that other. He dared not seek the proper opening, but he could, and straightway did, apply his sharp blue eyes to the wide crack that rose from its lower hinge.

Crosslegged around their lantern, a circle of half a dozen men sat on the floor within, crowding the scanty space. They were smoking Arab cigarettes and the resultant clouds made a mist in the round room, which partially obscured them. The backs of two, moreover, were toward the spy, but the white cloaks and turbans of these and three of their neighbors sufficed to proclaim them Mohammedans. The remaining figure was M. Paccaud.

He faced the door, and, in the lantern's light, his face was even less prepossessing than when Charley last observed it. The once pale face caught a sinister spark from the room's illumination; sweat had darkened his bangs, and these made the pallor of his face resemble that of the skin which covers the belly of a toad.

"So, then," he was saying—and he employed his own French as perhaps the easier of precision—"we may rest assured that you three have the bazar, the beggars, and all the people about the mosques perfectly in hand?"

His silken voice paused; his eyes danced nimbly from man to man among those whom he directly addressed. Three turbans bowed assent.

"The remàinder of us," the Grand Vizier continued, "are entirely prepared for the revolt here inside the palace—"

Charley, at the door-crack, most unprofessionally caught his breath.

"Remember that in Bir-Wadan my name is not to appear publicly in the affair until it is a *fait accompli*, and then it appears only as that of a well-wisher whose love of the people has overcome his personal affection for the tyrant." M. Paccaud stopped a chuckle with a cough. "Remember, too"—he smiled slowly at the other pair of conspirators, of whom one was seated with his cloaked back to the door—"that in Tarzut-el-Lakkaz circumspection must be employed, regarding the person of the Sultan. Hassan Hafitomi already understands; see that you do also, Harites Saadia Gaon. We are the Party of Modernism and Progress, and if a bloodless revolution be possible it will expedite our recognition by the Powers. I have only to lock his Majesty in a room with the Sultana's cat for five minutes—and he will abdicate of his own free will. This shall be done as soon as the shots waken him—"

The Amanian whose back was nearest Charley concluded the paragraph with a Mohammedan flourish.

"And the Islamic Republic will be declared at seven o'clock in the morning."

Charley looked at his wrist watch—it was one of those with phosphorus-painted hands and numerals. Eleven forty-five. The adventure of the Mosque of Hakim ibn Sina had been crowded into fifteen minutes, but it had not another to spare. The captive scientist, the fate of the kingdom—even, he regretfully conceded, the news—must wait upon the delicious whim of that little lady with the sloe-black eyes.

"I've got to keep my date," thought Charley.

Swiftly, but with a softness that fought mere haste, he crawled gently down the circular stairs. From that far-away court the dog howled again as the Kansan discreetly locked the tower door and slipped its key into his breast pocket.

NIGHT had dispatched a cool breeze to Tarzut-el-Lakkaz, and the scent of strange roses. The round moon shone, out of the zenith, on the Court of Stolen Waters and, in the luminous blue vault sloping away from the bright center myriads of stars but little higher than the palace towers shed a fairylike illumination. The royal palms spread their swaying umbrellas, and the water leaped like light and fell into the pool with the tinkle of silver. Wonder seemed tangible.

Charlie sat on the marble edge of the basin and looked at his watch. Eleven fifty-five. He hummed a stanza of that hallowed Kansas ballad called "The Slave's Lament." Half of a reporter's work is waiting, but this was the longest wait of C. J. B.'s existence.

And then, all of a sudden, though there was no sound, that scent of strange roses grew more and more poignant, and she was there.

She was radiantly there in the brilliant starlight, and more vivid than the stars. Charley held his breath at the sight of her.

In the masses of her dark hair, falling low over her broad brow, there shone a pigeon-blood ruby that held an aigrette of diamonds, but it was the hair that held him. Her brief dress was a gossamer of jewels, yet they were jewels at their proper uses, because they embellished without themselves arresting. Her anklets served only to accentuate the grace of her silvery feet. Her white arms, heavily braceleted, were not those of the American girl-in-a-picture; they had shape. The ivory breast, the proud column of the many-necklaced throat were girlish without angularity; the red mouth smiled, but did not mock; under their curling lashes, her sloe eyes were frank without bravado, clear without cynicism. She was everything that had eluded him—all that, awake, he had been stupidly fearful of remembering; she was final, she was fatal, she was the June night made human.

The fountain hushed its music as her voice said:

"Hello!"

Yet all that he could find for answer was an unworthy echo: "Hello!"

With a movement that was half of the reserved Occident and half oriental abandon she flung herself laughing beside him.

"I'm here."

Charley tried to remember who he was. "How did you shake Harmony Hall?" He saw her puzzlement. "How did you get here?" he asked.

"Oh!" Her bare, lithe shoulders shrugged. "They know I can't get much farther—and I *am* royal."

"I'll say you are," said Charley.

"But you!" She drew closer and her openly admiring face was troubled. "How is it that *you* are here? Don't you know that if the Sultan learns of this, it means your death?"

Her speech was a curious American, accented as was no American's that he had ever heard; her voice was golden. On the whole, he did not like to undeceive her as to Sidi Yusef's attitude toward him.

"*Sir gasoor*," he began, and then broke off. "*Ad astra per aspera*'s the motto of my state."

"Is that Greek?" she asked. "I don't know Greek."

"It's Latin," said Charley, glad for a chance to regain superiority, "and it means, 'It's a long, long road to Tipperary, but where there's a will, there's a way.' Now look here!" He looked around the sleeping court, anywhere save at her. "You want to do a bunk, and I'm the man to fix it, but would you"—he ran his fingers through his hair and regarded the pool at their feet—"would you mind telling me first how a girl like you ever got into a joint like this?"

She cupped her hands around a face now altogether serious. "My aunt brought me!"

"Some aunt!" said Charley.

The girl looked at him. "It was nine years ago—and I was only nine years old."

Buckwalter whistled.

"Oh, I know the kind of place it is!" The girl's eyes swam in sudden pools of unshed tears. "But neither of us did then, and now she—she wouldn't leave for anything."

It was terrible. The child was going to cry. That was not to be borne. He felt himself a brute, and suspended, for the moment, further inquiry.

"All right—all right. Don't you bother." Kansas is a Puritan state—but oh, Kansas, Kansas! "You're going to leave it all behind you," Charley vowed, "with me."

"I was going to leave it anyhow," she insisted. "I believe my aunt really wanted me to. Anyway, I had it all arranged. That was what was going on when those horses bolted and I fell out and—and you caught me this morning. I thought you were a Frenchman that a slave had promised would help."

"A Frenchman?" asked Charley, a knife in his heart. "Paccaud?"

"Oh, no! He's too loyal to his Majesty."

"Hum!" said Charley. He knew a bit about the Grand Vizier's loyalty. "But some French friend of yours?"

"No. We have no acquaintance outside the palace. *You* are the first. But Bir-Wadan is full of Frenchmen from Algiers. This was just some one that I had sent some diamonds to, so that he would get me away. The slave told me about him. I've never seen him."

Her face was truth itself.

"And you never will!" said Buckwalter.

THE stars hung low, the breeze sighed. She and the rose-perfume were very close to him.

"I never want to see him—now," she said. "Not now that you are here."

There was a pause, then:

"Do you like me?" asked the boy.

"You are the first American man I've seen since I came here. You *are* American, aren't you?"

"You bet I am! But," he insisted, though her eyes should have abundantly assured him, "do you like me?"

She put out a hand as if to touch him, and then drew it away.

"Yes," she said.

Well, the professor could wait some more, and the kingdom could fall! "Do you," he inquired, and nervously cleared his throat, "do you know a poem by the late John J. Ingalls called 'Opportunity'?"

She shook her head and said, "I don't know much poetry, except the Amanian." But her eyes were patently unaware of what her lips were uttering. "I don't know much of anything, except Tarzut-el-Lakkaz and what my aunt could teach me."

"It's a great poem by a great man," Charley said, "and part of it goes something like this." He reverently quoted:

"'I knock unbidden once at every gate!
If sleeping, wake—if feasting, rise before
I turn away. It is the hour of fate,
And they who follow me reach every state
Mortals desire.

It's Opportunity talking, you understand."

"It's lovely," she said, although she had scarcely heard him, being too happy in her gaze.

"Then," concluded Charley, "let's take its advice—let's beat it now!"

"Beat the poem?"

"Climb a wall—and go."

"I? With—" Her golden voice faltered. "With you?"

"I wouldn't let any one else horn in."

"But where? I was going to France this morning."

Greatly daring, he took her two hands in his. "You're going to Kansas now. Did you ever hear of Kansas?"

She nodded. "Why, of course!"

The stars were magnificent millions; they were so bright that as he bent to her through the rose-aura, he could see the tiny veins that made twin violets of her drooping lids.

"You're the sweetest thing in all the world," he said, without shame, although he had always deemed the man an ass who said such things. "I love you. We've got divorce courts in Kansas, and I'm going to marry you, and I don't care what—"

But she looked up. She saw something behind him.

"Run!" she cried.

HE TURNED to see what it was against which he should have the joy of defending her, and she, scarcely poising with bare feet upon its rim, leaped the pool in a single bound. His eyes reverted just in time to see her shoot through the air, a flash of white limbs and glittering gossamer and shining jewels, a dart of color like some tropical bird—and then the jealous shadows of the court enclosed her.

Nor could he follow. Bounding toward him, across his own side of the square, came three black giants. There was a chance that they had not identified her; he realized that his first duty was to guard her retreat.

"What do you want?" he demanded.

They were already among the palms, negroes of the royal household. One must have been close to seven feet in height, and his fellows were both well over six. Their naked breasts heaved like animated bronze. They halted at the daring of his upraised hand, but they did not answer.

In his excitement, Charley had used English. Now he repeated his inquiry in his worst French.

Useless; they understood no tongues but their own and that of Amana. The biggest man advanced another pace.

Buckwalter attempted signs. He wanted to indicate that he had the Sultan's protection, and that they ought to know it; but the message was too subtle.

Frowning, the leader came forward. He muttered something to his companions, and they crowded close behind. Charley bent double; he made a battering-ram of his head and torso, and rushed them.

They were unarmed, being servants within the seraglio, but so was he unarmed, and they were a trio to one, and that one far slighter than any of them. He struck the largest fellow fairly in the midriff, heard the air rasp out of his victim's mouth, felt him totter. He kicked at sharp shins and struck out blindly, with flaying fists. But, from its immediate conception, the attack was hopeless. The falling leader's fingers encircled his throat. From either side, black arms that were as hard as steel-wire cables embraced him. The four men rolled together under the palms, but, when they rose, an unwound turban had secured Charley's hands behind him.

As if he were a log, and a light one, the two lesser Nubians bore him between them across the square toward the women's quarters, of which the silence had now become that of a watching wakefulness. The tallest man vaulted to the balcony. The log was handed up, its custodians following. They took him through a window and stood him against a wall in a room heavily canopied and bright with lamps.

The head servant said something to the others, and passed through a swinging curtain of gold brocade. To the Kansan, one word was intelligible:

"Sultana!"

They hadn't recognized her, then. Charley grinned: they hadn't identified his companion and now she must be safely returned, and these fellows, mistaking him for an ordinary trespasser, were bringing him to judgment at her own hands. They were giving him and the Sultana a better chance than the two could have stolen.

"I'm most sorry I put up a fight," he thought. "I hope I didn't hurt 'em."

And then the smile stiffened on his freckled face.

For, from behind the curtain, came a voice that, though it spoke Hamitic, he could place even more surely than, in the mosque, he had placed Paccaud's. The tones were indeed feminine, but far, far from being the golden tones that he had come to love so quickly, yet so wholly. These were those of one for life accustomed to command, yet they were sharp and high—and by no means young.

The guards' knobby brown knees began to bend:

"Sultana!"

If this was the Sultana, *who* was the girl of the Fountain of Stolen Waters?

THE great arm of the head servant appeared, drawing back the curtain. The Nubians at Charley's side knelt and struck their foreheads against the floor. Then, under that bronze arm, a woman entered.

To her ankles she wore wide bloomers of crimson velvet, surmounted by a sort of Eton jacket entirely encrusted with pearls. The Sultana's nose turned up, and her lips turned down; her hair—plentiful, but drawn severely back to a rakish little cap bearing a peacock feather—was gray, and for its color her mouth seemed somehow responsible. Before her fishy eyes she mounted the spectacles of the myopic. Her expression was not amiable.

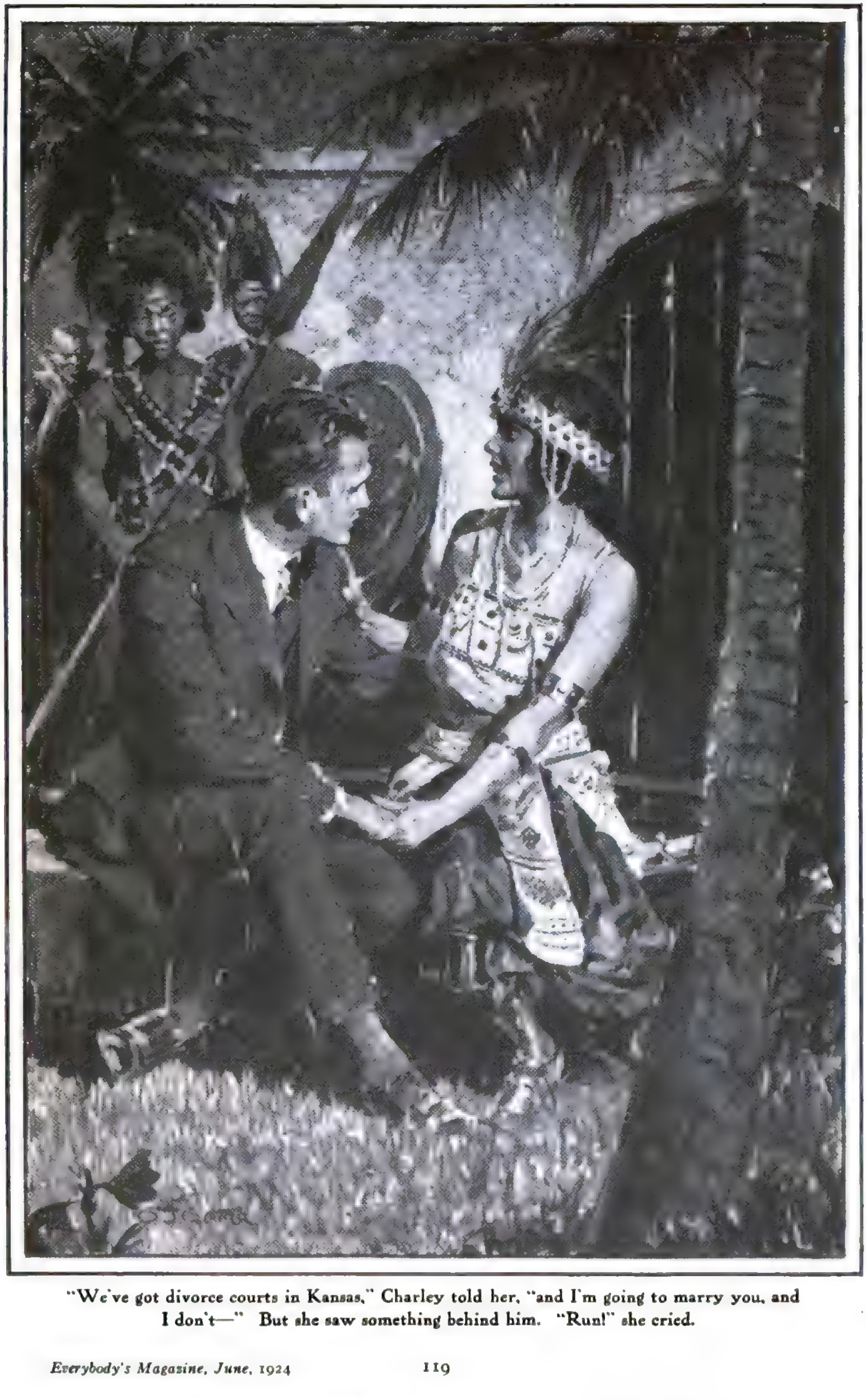
Charley labored under a severe personal emotion. In addition to it, he realized now that this was, after all, the woman he was really engaged to kidnap. Yes, he had a flash of understanding for the tyrant of Amana.

"Look up!" she said.

He had been watching her under what he hoped would seem respectably lowered brows.

"*Equitablement comme vous dites*," he murmured, and obeyed.

"And don't try that hybrid French on



"We've got divorce courts in Kansas," Charley told her, "and I'm going to marry you, and I don't—" But she saw something behind him. "Run!" she cried.

me, young man," her Majesty pursued in the English of his own land. "I know what you are. You're an American."

So indubitably was she. This was the aunt—the terrible aunt—of the girl he loved, and the girl he loved must be not even the least of Sidi Yusef's wives, but that bride-elect, the Little Flower, of whom faithless Hassan had spoken in Petros.

The toes of the Sultana's slippers terminated in rising half-circles. She stamped one of them. "An American!" she repeated.

"Yes, ma'am," said Charley.

"What's your business here?"

As long as her husband played fair, C.J.B.—although he would never surrender the Little Flower—was committed to his side. "Well," he said, "I'm a tourist, and I was just taking a look around—"

"Don't talk nonsense!" Her words pulled her lips still closer to her under jaw. "I had some men engaged to do something in Bir-Wadan this morning, and you interfered, and they were all arrested."

"That was an accident." He shot her a quick glance. "But you're making an admission."

The Sultana flushed. As a Sultana she scorned defense, but she was also an American and talking to an American.

"If my husband is silly enough to want to marry for the thirteenth time, well—there's a limit. I have a right to stop him." Through her thick spectacles, her eyes gleamed with a cold finality. "Young man," she said, folding her arms across that jacket of pearls, "I'm a busy woman, and I earn what sleep I can get. I've no time to bother with you—"

"I'll go," said Charley.

"You won't," she said. "Not yet—and perhaps never. My husband may know nothing about you directly—most likely he doesn't—but I believe you're in the Vizier's pay, and it comes to the same thing, I guess."

Charley felt that key to the tower of the mosque still secure in his breast pocket. The Sultana continued:

"You did enough for them this morning, so I can't see why you're here now, but of course it's on some mischief against me."

"You're wrong—" Charley began.

"Don't argue with me," she commanded. She looked significantly at the kneeling Nubians. "Now, I don't favor capital punishment, but you'd better mend your ways. The penalty for being caught in this part of the house is death—and I'm still the Sultan's only real wife, let him say what he likes. Well, I'll get you a quiet passage out of Tarzut-el-Lakkaz and Bir-Wadan tonight and across the border in the morning, if you'll pass me your word of honor as an American citizen not to make me any more trouble and not to come back. Otherwise, you'll have to take the consequences."

ANOTHER look at her convinced Charley that, short of the unexpected, she would carry out her implied threat if he crossed her. She was an extremely determined and very able woman.

"All right, Miss Sallie," he said.

She jumped. "What's that?"

"All right, Miss Mitchen. You don't remember Charley Buckwalter, but none of us old scholars of yours in the Dysartown grammar school have forgotten you. Only you know you wrote home you'd married a Greek on that trip of yours and were living in Constantinople—*a Greek Christian with no other wives*."

"Oh! Oh! *Oh!*"

She gasped. She wheeled. As if they were so many roaches, she swept the Nubians out of the room. Then she turned on her former pupil a face all dangerous resolve.

"I ought to have known you; you gave me trouble enough in the B class. Now," she cried, "you've *got* to stay here."

Charley walked over to her. He had the good reporter's hatred of a lie, the brave man's distaste for threatening a woman; but he was going to "land his story" of the professor, even if he had to sacrifice that of the Sultana—and he was going to get the Little Flower at any price.

"I represent the Hollidaysburg *Gazette*. I've got this yarn to a friend in Algiers. If I don't turn up inside of a week, he's to cable it."

The blow was almost physical. She sank on a divan. Her face was ashen, her near-sighted eyes held tears, and her mouth sagged.

"I—I had to write that letter," she sobbed. "I—I didn't want the home-folks to know what I'd done."

"Then," asked Charley, though his heart smote him, "why did you do it?"

She plucked at a lace handkerchief, produced from somewhere behind the rampart of pearls.

"How do I know? He was so rich, and there was the easy time—at least I expected it'd be easy. I was like all unmarried women over—over—twenty-five; I was fool enough to want a husband.

"So when the Sultan was at our hotel in Cairo, I made up my mind I'd meet royalty, and I—I just spoke to him. It wasn't modest, but he had lovely eyes, and he looked like a perfect gentleman. He was one, too, in those days. Well, an English girl at his university had refused him because he was so dark—but the Amanians are Caucasians, you know, even if they don't run to blue eyes and golden hair—and you remember I was a real blonde." She dabbed her lids with the bit of lace. "He was single then, but once he began marrying, he didn't know where to stop. He's afraid of me, but I just can't control him in that. I wouldn't have this known in Dysartown for all the world!"

She mentioned her niece. The girl had been a recent orphan in Indianapolis, with none to care for her save this school-teacher who gathered her up on the way to New York.

"I thought my marriage'd be so good for her. Nine years ago, I didn't know what a palace was like. It's a—a garden of intrigue."

Upon that word, Charley's journalistic soul pounced; his journalistic memory jumped after it. Fifteen years ago, the woman who was now Sultana of Amana wanted to be principal of the Dysartown High School; the present ornament of Wufford, being superintendent, prevented the appointment; thereafter she refused to speak to him. And now? How did Charley know the savant to be the author of those tappings? How did he know the doctor was alive? This woman looked soft enough for the moment; a few minutes since, she had threatened him with death.

"Miss Mitchen—I mean madam"—he pointed an accusing forefinger—"have you killed Professor McReynolds?"

"So you know about that, too?" The tears overflowed.

"What—you did it?"

"No, of course I haven't killed him, the tyrannical old pedagogue! He had some Amanian workmen over there in Petros, and one of them told him enough about me so that he guessed who I was. The news came back to me, and I couldn't let him go home with that story!"

"Is this true?"

"Certainly."

He believed that he could see it was. "Well taken care of?"

"He's only locked up, and I never saw a man eat so much; it makes talk, and the Sultan's sure to hear about it." Then the sense of her own plight again shook her. She clasped her hands. "Oh, Charley Buckwalter! You *won't* publish that article about me, will you?"

There came a heavily freighted pause between them. C.J.B. broke his record for quick thinking. By abandoning the story of the Sultana, he might secure the Little Flower and the professor—and keep his word to Sidi Yusef as well. This woman should prepare her niece's escape, the doctor's and his own, and then he would carry her away with the others; she would never be happy in Amana, anyhow, and he, being a correct young man, preferred a chaperon until the marriage and saw for his half-oriental bride some western educational advantages, in a resident mother-in-law thereafter. When he spoke, it was in the tone of a victorious general announcing his terms.

"YOU want your niece kidnaped, so's the Sultan won't marry her. Well, I'll kidnap her and marry her into the bargain. You know me, and you know my references are O.K. I'll kill the story about you and make the professor promise not to tell it; he'll owe that for his rescue, and all I need for the *Gazette* is just a good account of a kidnaping, with no reasons given, except some idea of a ransom. Well, I'll do all this, if you'll promise me an auto and passes and a road map and keep the gates clear—but, whether you want to or not, you've got to turn Dr. McReynolds over to me."

He had lately thought of her as an able and determined woman, yet he was not prepared for the calm with which she received this bargaining for her niece's hand. To be sure, she was probably jealous of the girl, but he had counted on some other token of emotion than the quick gleam of her myopic eyes that was all she vouchsafed, and although he was grown into a man of his word, he could remember no reason for his former teacher to expect that development. Her sole objection was:

"I said that I'd get you out of here right away. I couldn't manage three people at this hour of the night—not without warning."

"Tomorrow night'll do."

She stood up. She seemed to be thinking it over.

"Will you trust me implicitly?" she asked of Charley, and she came close to him.

"As long," he answered, "as you do me."

Then she threw her arms around his neck and, at the top of her voice, began to scream.

Charley did not require a knowledge of the local language in order to understand the burden of those terrific yells. It was the Hamitic for "Help!"

He tried to wriggle free. She clung the closer.

"Stop it!" he commanded. He loathed treachery, he loathed still more the thought that anybody could succeed in deceiving the great C.J.B. "What do you think you're trying to do?" And then he wrenched an arm free and clapped his hand over her open mouth.

She flung back her head, but his gagging palm pressed after it. Her cap came off and its peacock feather cavorted half across the room. Then the three recently dismissed Nubians plunged through the up-flung curtain.

The Sultana sprang aside. The blacks precipitated themselves upon Charley. He leaped back and knocked over a tabouret, that rolling toward them, tripped two of them and sent them crashing to the floor.

Bare feet pounded in a run on tiles. Charley's boots stamped on the toes of the third black who held him in a clinch. The fellow cried out and let go, blundering backward a step against his advancing companions. Buckwalter had got a leg through the window when a second party of guards burst into the room.

He was too late now; these men were armed, and their leader—it was that brother of Hassan who had conducted Charley to the Sultan earlier in the day—shouldered forward. He raised a flaming scimitar above the Kansan's red head.

The Sultana had started erect. Her shrieks had subsided. Charley called to her:

"If anything happens to me, my friend'll file that cable."

It was not, however, the Sultana that stayed the scimitar's descent; it was a tired voice from the curtain that made death draw away. Sidi Yusef had come in.

"What's all the infernal racket about?"

He spoke English and addressed the universe at large. He was stuffing back into his pajamas pocket a paper bag that bulged with chocolate buds, but the strength of his bare words was mocked by the lassitude of his tone, and he evinced a marked disinclination to draw the fire of his wife.

Nevertheless, that lady was not to be evaded. She walked straight up to him.

"Where on earth have you been?" she demanded. "I thought you would *never* come! I might be murdered in my bed, for all you'd care." She paused not for a reply to her question—gave no opportunity for defense against her accusation. "What's the racket, indeed!" The Sultana mimicked the Oxford speech and intonation of her spouse. "Can't you see for yourself? What you call the sanctity of the harem has been violated—that's what the racket is." She pointed to Charley. "Look at that desperate man over there!"

Sidi Yusef was mildly relieved to consider somebody other than the lady. He pattered to Charley.

"I say, you know, it won't do. It won't do at all."

Buckwalter searched that face for some signal, some expression of their private understanding. If any had been forthcoming, the Sultana prevented it. She pushed her way between them.

"There's no sense talking to him like that. I'm glad none of these colored men can understand English! Why do you talk at all? You know what the punishment is for this. You know what happened to that Italian year before last. What's the matter with you? Can't you protect your wife?"

"Wives," corrected Charley, beginning to recover himself.

"HOLD your tongue!" snapped the former Miss Mitchen. "There's no exception to the law covering your offense—no excuses. Before sunset tomorrow, young man, you'll have to die."

"But, my dear!" said the Sultan.

"Sidi!" said his wife. That was all, but she said it effectually.

As for Charley, he was not her husband. Said he: "Unless I tell what I know, why, by sunset tomorrow there won't be any sultanate. There's going to be a revolution, only I've got the revolutionists shut up. I heard them plotting in the mosque and I locked them in a tower."

"Quite impossible."

"I tell you I heard 'em."

"And you—one man, by Jove!—you mean to say—"

Charley got out the key. "If you don't believe me, come and look for yourself."

But the Sultana stamped her foot.

"Sidi, you would always let anybody but me talk you around to anything. I don't believe a word he says, but if it's true we can prove it later. Just now we've got to deal with him, and no matter what he's done in the mosque, he's got to go into the crypt of it now—he's got to die tomorrow."

An able and determined woman: Charley remembered his appraisal of her. She looked now at her husband, with scornful resolution—at her former pupil with no expression whatsoever.

"Sallie—" said the Sultan deprecatingly.

"Now, listen!" cried Charley. "If either one of you tries any rough stuff on me—well, I know a lot about each of you that the other don't, and, *cloches d'enfer*, I'll spill more beans for you—"

She called one of her slaves, whose brown palm promptly stopped Buckwalter's mouth as Buckwalter had lately essayed to stop the Sultana's.

"THERE'S one thing I'd like to say," remarked C.J.B. There was nobody at hand to serve as audience, much less prevent him. "Rising to a point of personal privilege, I'd like to go on record that, when I get out of this jail, I'll fix Miss Sallie Mitchen's feet for her, if I have to lose the professor and throw down the *Gazette* and give up everything but the Little Flower to put it across."

He was in a vaulted cellar under the Mosque of Hakim ibn Sina, the Ancestor, and there did not appear much probability of his ever making good the threat. With that hand tight upon his mouth throughout the journey, the Sultana's Nubian guards had conducted him to the front entrance of the Moslem pile, led him through its pillared porch, started him down a flight of stone steps, set a dim lantern on one of them, and then retired, locking the stair door behind him and leaving him in her Majesty's private prison.

Charley addressed the closed door as symbolic of the Sultana:

"If your husband wasn't just an oyster—if he had any backbone—if he wasn't scared half to death of you—"

He stopped. In an alcove at the foot of the stairs stood the four-legged frame of a native bedstead, an *angareb* with matting woven across it by way of mattress. On it lay a thin blanket in such a heap as a man might have left it rising.

Then Charley argued that he ought not to be alone. If this crypt was indeed the Sultana's jail, a fellow sufferer from her dread of Kansas gossip—Professor McReynolds, no less—should be somewhere near by.

Scrape—scrape—tap-tap.

He was!

Charley rounded a thick pillar. The great subterranean chamber spread out before him, fairly well lighted by seven hanging lamps. At its eastern end, with an open clasp-knife in his heavily veined fist, a tiny, bald-headed man stopped before the wall, from which a stretch of whitewash had been scraped, revealing designs in still bright mosaics.

"Good evening," said Charley.

"Go away," said the old man. He did not run or turn his head.

"My name's Buckwalter," said Charley. "I represent the Hollidaysburg *Gazette.*"

The professor spun around. He trotted forward. He wore horned glasses and had a white beard streaked with yellow.

"My dear sir—my *dear* sir. You came upon me at a most inopportune time, but anybody from Pottawatomie County—" He closed his knife and absent-mindedly dropping it, began to shake hands. "In a very short time, I shall feel free to tell you of something that will give the *Gazette* news calculated to startle the whole world."

"I'll *tell* the world you will."

"And make Stanford and Harvard, Yale and Chicago forever envious of Wufford."

"Colleges? I don't get you."

"But just now you must wait a little—exercise a little patience; science has to prove each step before she takes it, she should never be premature. Sit down, Mr.—Mr.—"

"Buckwalter, C. J. I used to be with the Lumleyville *Globe*, but it was too slow for me."

"Well, sit down, Mr. Buckwalter. I'm afraid there are no chairs, but that stone in the corner is very comfortable. When did you leave home, and what was the news then?" The Doctor of Philology and Master of Architecture motioned his interviewer to an ancient block.

Generally C.J.B. was too good a newspaper man to hurry what, borrowing a technical term from life insurance, he called a "prospect"; generally, too, he would have yielded to no man in a desire to talk of Pottawatomie. He could appreciate the professor's scholastic enthusiasms if they led to "copy" and could share his county loyally if it led nowhere. But the immediate circumstances were peculiar. Charley studied the wall. There had been several attacks upon it, but as far as he could see, not one so much as penetrated the mosaics that seemed everywhere to underlie the whitewash.

"How's the tunnel getting on?"

"The tunnel?"

"Why, yes! You're digging out, aren't you?"

Dr. McReynolds shook his yellow-streaked beard and smiled sadly.

"I suppose boys always will be impetuous. My students are; I dare say I was once so. Well, well, Mr. Buckwalter, you've found me, and if you give your word not to publish anything until I'm ready, I'll tell you my secret."

NOBODY inside Tarzut-el-Lakkaz that night wanted anything printed; C.J.B. wondered how they thought a newspaper man earned his pay. Still Charley, having no means of escape, was eager to learn those of his fellow prisoner; and, after all, "until I am ready" was a clause of promise; the professor would manifestly be "ready" as soon as he was free, and C.J.B. couldn't publish anything until, if ever, *he* was.

"I give you my word," he said.

"Faithfully?"

"Sure!" He *must* learn how to get out of this place. Dr. McReynolds looked about, to assure himself that there were no eavesdroppers. He was quite safe. These two Americans were the sole tenants of the Sultana's jail.

"First," he said, tapping off the point on the index finger of his left hand with the index finger of his right, "note that at the burning of the Alexandrian Library by Amru—the later library of course—there began a series of losses to history that culminated eight hundred and thirteen years later, when Constantinople fell and, according to both Ducas and Hody de Graecis, 120,000 more volumes disappeared. Not a single reliable map of the Eastern Empire remained, and all geographies subsequent to the end of the Dark Ages have depended on a few medieval sketches, drawn from tradition and preserved in the Vatican and British Museum. These I have always contended to be radically inaccurate."

Charley, vainly trying to guess what was coming, nodded.

"They agree," continued the professor, "upon only one point: that the boundaries of New Rome never extended south of about 34 degrees on the occidental side of the ninth eastern meridian. Amana, as you know, is some miles farther south and west; yet"—he nodded to his wall scrapings—"I have found proof that this mosque was once a Byzantine Christian Church, and I have come upon an inscription announcing that the money for its erection was donated by 'Our Lord the Emperor'—an inscription surmounted by the *chirrho* of the Constantinian Cross!"

C.J.B. looked at him glassily.

"Well?" he inquired.

"Well"—the savant's triumph could make him charitable to ignorance—"all existing geographies of the Eastern Empire will be shown to be wrong by a member of the faculty of Wufford University."

"Yes, I see," said Charley. "It's a good story, but—" Then a glance at the professor's rapt face demonstrated the folly of trying to hurry a scientific passion. Dr. McReynolds would lead up to his plan for escape only in his own way.

"Point one," said the professor. "Now for point two, I call your attention to the native language of this country. It is Hamitic. Do you know it, Mr. Buckwalter?"

"I know they call it that, but I don't speak it, if that's what you mean."

"Don't speak it? Really? That's a

pity. However, I may tell you that the ethnologists of Europe and America have been for years acrimoniously divided over the question: 'Do, or do not, the Hamites derive from the Egyptians?' In a papyrus that I found under this plaster, in the pursuit of my other researches, I have come across a statement—"

Charley bent to him: "That tells some secret passage?"

"Not at all!" There was a touch of annoyance in Dr. McReynolds's voice. "That speaks of a chest buried somewhere here, in which the first Sultan of Amana, for whom this mosque was named and who himself claimed to be of the Koreish, the tribe of the Prophet, narrates the story of whence his people came and how they came here. I have only to find that chest, and very likely I shall have contributed absolutely new and authentic testimony to the controversy of the Hamites' origin." His momentary asperity disappeared at the thought. "And this by a citizen of Pottawatomie County! What will the *Gazette* say to that?"

Charley's patience snapped.

"It won't know, if I don't tell it!" he cried. "And how am I to do that as long as— Look here, I'm a prisoner, too, and what I want to know is how to get out."

"A prisoner?" The doctor polished his spectacles and smilingly replaced them. "Ah, then you can help me in my excavations."

"I don't want to help you in your excavations. I haven't time. You may be a lifer, but I'm in the death-cells; and I've *got* to make a getaway before tomorrow evening! I wish that I hadn't been such a fool as to tell on those revolutionists! I'm sick of Amana. I've seen everything I want to see, except a dancing dervish, and I bet he wouldn't be up to the Russian Ballet. Somehow or other, I'm going to get out—and I'll take you along with me. I am going to set you free!"

But again, and now amazingly, Professor McReynolds shook his head.

"Nothing would induce me to leave," he said, "before I secured this evidence in the matter of Hamitic origins."

CHARLEY faced the professor with a sad calm.

"The trouble with me is, I've got too much faith in human nature," he said, "I ought to have expected this from you. I admit I didn't, but I ought to have. After sixteen or seventeen hours' sight-seeing around Tarzut-el-Lakkaz, it wasn't reasonable of me to hope for a glimmer of intelligence from any of the patients—except me. I beg your pardon."

Dr. McReynolds only continued to shake his yellow-streaked beard.

Somewhere overhead, there was the noise of a heavy door opening. Charley couldn't heed it.

They exercised their conflicting theories of logic. At last C.J.B. said:

"Dr. McReynolds, I've come a good many hundred miles out of my way to rescue you: I've promised myself to rescue you; in my own mind, I've promised the Hollidaysburg *Gazette* to rescue you—and now rescued you've *got* to be."

"How?" ventured the professor.

As Charley had no plan, this was a pointed question. He did not hesitate.

"Never you mind how," he began. "There's somebody else that would like to know how, too, and that's the Sultana. She thinks she can put anything over on me, the way she used to do when I was in her school; she'll find out her mistake and so'll you."

But it was a poor bluff, and he knew it. He was almost glad when the doctor said: "Hush!"

Another door had opened. Slow steps were descending the stairs to the crypt.

"Now, who do you suppose that can be?" asked the professor, patently in dread of another rescuer.

"I don't suppose; I know," said Charley. Naturally, it would be the Sultana, seeking the necessary private interview with him.

He debated how he could ever explain that Algerian fable to her. He heard a group of men leaving the mosque; the revolutionists, of course.

"I might have known she was mixed up in that, too," thought Charley.

The descending footfalls on the crypt stairs continued, and presently Sidi Yusef, in tweeds again, as weary as a somnambulist and without a chocolate bud visible, advanced toward her Majesty's prisoners.

"Who is it?" whispered Dr. McReynolds. "He has the Koreish green in his turban."

The professional brain of the great

C.J.B. worked with the speed and quiet of a thoroughly oiled electric fan.

"I told you I knew who it was," he said. "It's a fellow that'll pull you out of here by your whiskers, if I give him the high sign. Get over there in a corner and be good."

That impudence was sufficient. The scientist trotted into the shadows, and Charley put him out of earshot by himself advancing to the Sultan.

"What's that chap doing down here?" asked Sidi Yusef.

In a low voice, Charley told him as much as it seemed wise that he should know; but the Sultan gave small attention to his answer. The inquiry had been purely instinctive; the royal mind was occupied with its own troubles, and the royal eyes ruminated over Charley as those of Newton must have ruminated over the dog that had destroyed his invaluable papers. When, however, he spoke again, it was with none of the resignation of Diamond's master.

"Well," he demanded, "you've managed to get us all into a jolly mess, haven't you?"

BUCKWALTER safely assumed that his arch-enemy would not have changed her story as to how the intrusion into her rooms had been effected. It was safer for Charley's hopes, anyhow; he did not then want the jealous Sultan to know of the Little Flower's presence at the Fountain of Stolen Waters.

"You said I was to kidnap the Sultana," he protested, "and how was I to kidnap her if I didn't go and get her."

"Bally rot!" said Sidi Yusef. "You knew very well you couldn't carry her away without any help—eh, what? I told you to wait for further word from me."

This reasoning was too sound for comfort. Charley said nothing.

"And I told you, you know," sighed the Sultan, "what would happen to you if you failed." He seated himself crosslegged on a heap of masonry. "Eh—what?"

"Anyway," pleaded Charley, standing before him like a criminal who has been asked if he has anything to say before sentence is pronounced, "I turned up that revolutionary conspiracy for you—"

"Indeed, you did, my lad!" Sidi Yusef's dull-ringed fingers laced and interlaced. "And I've just liberated those chaps at the risk of a most awful dressing. Of course the Vizier's plotting my overthrow—and a handsome price I had to pay him out of the privy-purse to get him to do it, too."

"I didn't know the job of cooking up revolutions was included in a premier's portfolio."

"There are quite a number of things you don't know—eh? You've seen the Sultana; wouldn't she leave me like a shot if I lost my throne?"

"But I was to get her away."

"When you come to my age, Mr. Buckwalter, you'll know better than to use only one means at a time to coerce a woman. Besides, do you think my other responsibilities make life easy? I don't care a fig for the sultanate, and that's a fact. I don't want to be a tyrant any more. It's too hard work, and it's telling on me. I wasn't properly educated for it; the day of this sort of thing's passed—and I've been at the infernal grind long enough to have earned a rest."

The Sultan's haggard eyes roved over the crypt.

"It does me good to find somebody I can tell the truth to. Rain or shine, I have to work a twenty-four-hour day and make ten changes of clothes. Going to mosque, riding in state, trying new motor-cars, reviewing the army, issuing decrees, revoking stupid old laws and making stupid new ones, receiving clever diplomats that rob me, personally judging half the tuppenny rows between worthless, lying, long-winded suitors, where neither party's in the right and nobody can possibly be satisfied, swallowing flattery, and dodging assassination from sunrise to sunrise. I don't get a minute to myself. Privacy? Why, there are three heads of three separate tribes whose hereditary honor it is to take turns standing around my bed whenever I try to get a night's rest!"

This was the man that Charley had thought of as "having it pretty soft"!

"Why don't you abdicate?"

The sincerity of Sidi Yusef's voice had been unmistakable. This was probably the first occasion since he came into power that he had been able to talk of his position with frankness, and he meant to make the most of it. Tonight he was at that stage of engrossment in private difficulties, at which anybody will talk to any listener.

Charley's query recalled their relative positions no more than momentarily.

"I'm talking to you like this, you know, because you're probably going to die today, and so I might as well answer that question, too—eh? People think that because a man is a monarch, he isn't a man. They're wrong. Well, then, I'm afraid to abdicate and that's flat. *She* won't let me. Oh, you may smile"—Charley hadn't smiled—"but if you do, you don't know her. I don't fear anything on earth but her cat, and her tongue—and now I'll have to lie to her about Paccaud's plot and she'll probably catch me in the lie!"

He looked moodily before him. Then he shrugged his shoulders and added: "For nine years I haven't cared a button whether I lived or died—not a button."

He made it abundantly clear that his official life was little except tiresome routine; now he revealed that his domestic existence was worse.

"I believe I might bear up if it wasn't for that bally brute, but she keeps it because she can scare me with it. I had one poisoned. I shall never try *that* again. She was—I should rather have been in jail!"

"You were brave about one thing," Charley reminded him. "You married again—several times."

"That was hoping against hope. Each time, I thought, you know, it might put her back up so that she'd make a bolt."

STEP by step, they had advanced to the topic that Charley wished, beyond all others, to touch upon.

"You felt that way even about—about her niece?"

"Of course I did! *I* didn't want to marry her niece. Haven't I told you I never wanted to marry anybody again—not really? Only, you see, I did think she wouldn't stand that."

Another step sounded on the stair; pale M. Paccaud, somewhat wilted about the collar by his confinement in the torrid tower, tiptoed down the crypt.

"Your Majesty—"

"Yes, yes," said the Sultan. "I'm coming."

"Your Majesty must be in your bedroom when the revolution begins. It is essential. I have just got rid of the hereditary guard, sire."

"What does the Sultana say?"

"She has been told that we have all been imprisoned."

The Sultan reluctantly rose.

"But look here," Charley protested—he had unearthed an essential fact concerning the Little Flower and could now spare a little attention to his own dilemma. "What about me?"

"If the revolution succeeds," said the Sultan, "I'll pack you off instantly, and you'll have to seize her from the rebels—who have—er—consented to surrender her—and take her along. Didn't I tell you you were to receive further details? Well, that was one of them, and you were to hear it as soon as the republicans had agreed. If the revolution succeeds; I can't do anything for you as long as I'm in power, for then her Majesty is. She's set her own men at the palace gates since you appeared, you know."

"I'm in love with her niece," said Charley. "If I go, she goes with me. And Dr. McReynolds, too."

Sidi Yusef gasped. "The Little Flower! How did you meet her?" But the next moment he added: "Ah, well, it doesn't matter. I said 'if the revolution succeeds'; but it won't, you know. I shall never believe that her Majesty has been hoodwinked by this tarradiddle about the conspirators' arrest."

"Well, then?"

"Then I shall be extremely sorry for you."

"But your Majesty—"

M. Paccaud dared to touch the royal sleeve. "Sire—"

"Extremely sorry," repeated the Sultan. "Good night—or, rather good morning."

CHARLEY stood stock-still while the footsteps of the Sultan and his vizier ascended the stairs and first the door to the crypt and then that of the mosque closed behind them. For a while he stood still, turning the situation over in his mind.

Suddenly a volley of shots rang out from somewhere overhead. As Charley jumped to his feet, a second volley sounded.

"What's that?" the professor asked, coming forward from his corner.

"They're off," shouted Charley, running toward him. "The old girl hasn't been able to put the kibosh on the race, after all!"

Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang! went rifles.

"I haven't any idea what you're talking about," the professor complained; "but I am startled. That first noise made me drop my glasses; they're broken, and I have only one emergency pair with me."

There were more shots—a good many more—and then—yes—Charley heard the door of the mosque torn open. He heard the crypt door treated similarly. A tidal wave of turbaned men washed down the stairs and swept between the prisoners. Charley saw the poor professor flung against the wall; all this as in a lightning flash; an instant more and the young reporter was busily defending himself.

Could this mob be deluded royalists? Were they somehow protecting what they wrongly believed to be the Sultan's cause? Or were they the Sultan's men? They were treating Charley roughly enough.

Four of them were upon him. He struck out; he heard, with the gratification of savage rage, the thud of his blows; but his assailants closed upon him and embraced him. High on their shoulders they bore him, struggling, up the steps and into the porch of the mosque.

It was full daylight now. A paved court stretched before him, empty, save for a dropped turban, some cast-off rifles and—confusion to his doubts and crown of his brightest hope—a high-powered limousine purring within a yard of his nose as his rescuers set him down. Across the court, a gate stood open, and beyond that Charley could see a long line of country road.

A turbaned group stood in the porch. From it, while Charley spoke, a figure of some apparent importance was detaching itself. He was a fine fellow, upstanding, with a frank smile.

"I fear that my men did not explain themselves to *monsieur*, and that they have not been very polite. But one must make haste, and the royal orders were peremptory."

"Oh, it's all right."

"Then will *monsieur* have the goodness to follow me?"

He led the way to the other side of the car, where the chauffeur's seat was placed.

"*Monsieur* can drive?"

"Can I?" Charley was studying the clutch, fondling the steering-wheel, admiring the entire mechanism. Suddenly he paused. "But I won't budge *cette* Lizzie without my passengers."

The Amanian indicated the nearer window. "If *monsieur* will look within," he said, then drew several discreet paces away.

CHARLEY flung open the door. There, surrounded by bundles, and herself swathed as when he had first seen her, the Little Flower, throwing aside her yashmak, smiled up at him with her American lips, and the sloe-eyes that he had once thought so oriental.

Suddenly another figure, swathed with its bundled draperies and orthodox yashmak, and borne by more Amanians, was hustled into the limousine from the other side.

"That's the old lady, isn't it?" asked Charley, grinning.

"Yes, *monsieur.*" His rescuer grinned, too.

"Then lock the doors!" Charley cautioned. "Lock both doors, or she'll get out. Isn't there a key?"

There was, and it was used.

"That's that," said Charley. Now that he knew her for what she was, he didn't fancy the Sultana's presence, but he had to keep his word to Sidi Yusef—who, indeed, probably wouldn't let him go unless he did keep it—and he was not above a sort of glee in being able to turn the tables on his former jailer.

He was given the key and a pair of army automatics.

"There may be some trifling disturbances on the road at first; the fighting is not yet over."

"*Je dois me tourmenter,*" said C.J.B. "This will be a pay-as-you-enter trolley, for anybody that tries to come aboard. *Sir gasoor mithel-e-sebas wa shatar mitel el warvel.*"

He was given directions, rapid but minute for the quickest way to skirt Bir-Wadan and the mountain, and so to proceed to the Algerian line. "Now, if *monsieur* will hurry?"

But the professor? Down there, in the crypt, Charley had relented, saying that he would, if he escaped, most likely leave the savant to those researches on which that venerable heart was set, and now he knew that the doctor could come to no harm since the Sultana would be permanently absent. Just the same, up here things looked different. His professional pride revolted at surrendering even a self-imposed assignment, at losing a good piece of news, and especially one for which he had risked so much.

There came shots from the direction of the Bir-Wadan.

"If *monsieur* will hurry!"

Besides, if he had no news at all, how was he, having once flouted that journal's offer, to "land" on the *Gazette?*

Muffled cries rose out of the limousine. Kicks. A window rattled.

"You will, will you?" said Charley, to the cries. "All right. My promise to *you* doesn't hold, because it was conditional, and you double-crossed me. I'll let the professor alone—and I'll make a hummer out of *your* story."

"If only *monsieur* will—"

Charley leaped into the chauffeur's seat. "You bet *monsieur* will." Hands and feet were busy. "*Cloches d'enfer*. Watch me step on the gas." He stepped—rather he shot one boot forward as if delivering a blow. "Now then!"

The Amanian fell back. The car leaped forward. The racket within ended in what must have been a fall.

THEN an unfortunate accident occurred. As if in quest of its mistress, the Sultana's Angora cat came racing across the court ahead of the automobile and at right angles to its course. Charley saw it too late. He swerved the automobile to the left, but the animal jumped in that direction—to the right, but the cat jumped in *that*. The near wheels passed over its screaming throat.

Buckwalter swore contritely, yet the thing was past mending. The big black Juggernaut was already sweeping through the opened gate.

"Oh, well," its driver half-heartedly comforted himself, "now that the Sultan's a free man, the poor puss hadn't more than a few hours to live, anyhow."

The car dashed on. The day bloomed with the freshness of a June morning; the flitting trees stirred in the early breeze; behind him, and growing momentarily more distant, the towers of Tarzut-el-Lakkaz leaped into the sky like gigantic marks of mute exclamation. The automobile fairly flew down the mountain road.

Charley's thoughts raced with the car. He was free; he had his sweetheart in his keeping, he was kidnaping the Sultana; he had "landed" a story that would shake his state, and he was headed for Kansas. He thought of his disappointment at Petropolis—his journey across the desert—that first imprisonment—the eavesdropping in the tower—the eldritch flights with the Nubians—the amazing discovery of Sallie Mitchen—the pig-headed and now forsaken professor. But most of all, he thought of the Little Flower at the Fountain of Stolen Waters. Then he wanted to let go the wheel and pinch himself into the certainty that he was waking.

And this machine could *go!* It responded so readily, it increased its speed with such a provocative ease, that it tempted him increasingly. More—more—a little more. There was no limit.

After a safe bit he stopped, descended, and looked in through the near window. The Little Flower, white but brave, smiled up at him. Her forlorn companion's head was buried in a heavily draped pair of arms and rocking to and fro.

"All right?" called Charley.

The girl nodded.

"Both of you?"

"Yes."

"Then we must get right on."

His heart pulled against that necessity, but he remounted and drove forward.

The great adventure had happened. Over and over to himself, Charley repeated his tangible triumphs.

C.J.B. of Kansas had captured single-handed the greatest piece of exclusive news ever sent a paper in his native state. With this, if he chose, he could go to a Chicago paper—to a New York paper, but he wouldn't; the glory should all be for his own commonwealth. As Pallas Athena leaped mature from the brow of Zeus, the "lead" and climax of what he would cable sprang word-perfect to Charley's lips; he could write the first instalment of his beat in fifteen minutes.

Of minor import, yet humanly insistent, was his personal satisfaction at thwarting his old schoolmistress and recent captor. He had squared their long-standing account.

"Of course," he said, as he bent over the wheel, "I've wished her on my hands for the rest of her natural life, I guess; she can't ever get a school in Kansas after this scandal. But I won't have her running *my* house. I'm a free American citizen, and *I'll* be the boss!"

Far more momentous was her niece. The Little Flower transcended even his professional achievement. He had won the One Wonderful Woman, and his softened thoughts returned always to her.

Through a wild and deserted country they made their way. The mountains had retreated, looming in sullen purple far behind. Foothills ran down to their course and then declined into rolling land not unlike his Kansas prairies, but tenantless and long uncultivated. Here the path twisted through thickets whose branches rattled against the limousine like hail, and there it traversed a wide area where there was almost no growth at all.

THREE hours later they struck the railroad at Beni Mansur. Long ere that, the highway commissioners had been more conscientious. Leaving Dra-el-Mizen on his right, Charley, as he had been instructed to do, headed northwest through more mountains by the pass to the sea.

They reached table-lands. The heavens deepened to violet, an iridescent glory flamed ahead. They climbed without more mishaps. The sky became a fading rose that passed and left a dome of emerald. Below them huddled white Mohammedan roofs; beyond these, the lamps of occidental streets twinkled brightly; still farther away, water reflected the dancing lanterns of anchored ships: Algiers.

But there was one thing on Charley's mind, and he resolved to get rid of it before he entered the city. He dismounted, opened the limousine's door and beckoned forth a willing and cramped Little Flower.

"Never mind *her*," he said, thus impolitely indicating his other passenger, as that bundle of clothes squeaked at him. "We're most at the end of the joy-ride."

The girl's eyes swept from the green sky to the white roofs and the lights of the lower town.

"It's beautiful."

"Wait till you see Hollidaysburg, and the Luna Park there."

A hand stole into Charley's. "Am I going too?"

"It's up to you. I've got a confession to make. I—look here, don't you think I ought to know the name of the girl I'm in love with?"

"It's Jennie," she said. "What's yours?"

"Charley. I like Jennie. I was afraid it might be something flapperish."

"Flapperish?" She looked up at him.

"Yes—like a flapper. Now, then, Jennie—"

"What's a flapper?"

He welcomed the postponement. "I wish I knew. Out our way, a rag rug that pretends it's a tiger-skin. But don't you worry; we don't have many of 'em in Kansas."

"I know I should like it there."

There was more noise from the car. "Pottawatomie's all right, but perhaps, after you've heard what I'm going to say about myself, you won't want to go there—at least, not with me."

The pressure of her hand was timid, but it gave him courage.

"You see—" he began.

"I know," she nodded. In the ghost of a voice, she said: "You spoke—at the Fountain of Stolen Waters, it was—about a divorce; you're—you're married?"

"Have a heart! I am not! Just then, I thought you were."

"You're not? I'm so *glad!* I'll be crying in a minute."

"But listen here. Here's what's wrong. "I've got a bad habit—I brag. Sometimes it's Kansas or Pottawatomie; sometimes it's myself. It's myself mostly. Not so much what I say—my manner." He took the plunge. "Back there at Tarzut—that was at the fountain, too—I let on I was doing this whole rescue lone-handed. Well, I wasn't—"

"Charley," she said, "I found that out hours ago."

He seized her other hand. "And you don't mind?"

"Not a bit."

He had bent to kiss her ready lips, when her fellow-traveler jumped from the limousine with a cry that sounded uncommonly like an oath. Charley spun around.

"What's the matter with her *now?*"

Jennie said: "Why do you always call him 'her,' dear? Aunty's guards always called him 'the old lady,' but I don't think it was very nice of them."

Shedding drapery after drapery, in an

unswathing as if Tut-ankh-Amen's wife were coming back to the plane of living mortals, the other passenger strode toward them. Where the yashmak had hung, there now smoldered the scholarly face—there now wagged the yellow-streaked beard—of Cyrus M. McReynolds, R.P.D., Dr. Philol, M. Ar., from Wufford University, Wamego, Pottawatomie County, Kansas.

THE professor hopped up and down directly in front of Charley's nose.

"You have kidnaped me out of an Amanian prison; I'm an American citizen. The United States is at peace with Amana; this is an international affront, and unless you restore me to Tarzut-el-Lakkaz, I'll call the matter to the Grand Vizier's attention and have him lodge a protest with our State Department in Washington."

The great C.J.B. was master of himself. He showed no surprise. He looked in the professor's direction as if he didn't see him; then he looked at Jennie.

"It was your aunt that fixed this up?"

"Of course it was."

"That's what you meant when you knew hours ago that I'd had help?"

Jennie nodded. The Sultana hadn't at all double-crossed him. On the contrary she had kept her word.

"I demand your answer!" cried the doctor.

She didn't know Sidi Yusef had guaranteed Charley the run of the palace. She imprisoned him only to keep him out of harm's way until her preparations were completed—she had even accomplished that dastardly embrace, uttered those convincing yells, to this end—and for this escape, because of the disturbance that the revolt occasioned, one of the Sultan's motor-cars was available.

"Do you hear—hear me?" spluttered Dr. McReynolds.

"She trusted you with me?" Charley asked of the girl.

"Aunt Sallie says she knows Kansas boys 'from the ground up'; she says she hasn't taught school out there for nothing." Even in the moonlight, he could see the Little Flower blush into a rose as she added: "And I coaxed her when I ran back to the seraglio—people don't understand Aunty; all she wants is a little affection—"

"If you won't answer me," said the savant, "I'm going to walk back to Tarzut-el-Lakkaz."

"No, you're not." The voice of C.J.B. was businesslike. He laid a firm hand on his prisoner's shoulder. "I'm sorry for you, but I warned you I'd rescue you, and I need either you or the Sultana in my business. It's one story or the other. Well, here you are, and home you've got to go."

"There is French law in Algiers; there is an American Consul—"

Charley's tone changed. "You've made one big discovery; the other'll keep. It's only for a few weeks. I just want you as my Exhibit A." He told frankly of his situation between those two stools, the Lumleyville *Globe* and the Hollidaysburg *Gazette*. He romanticized the plight of the Sultana's niece. "Now then," he said, putting his other arm about Jennie's waist, "you don't want to be rough with *her;* this little lady's husband's bread and butter depend on you."

The girl regarded McReynolds with wistful eyes. The professor's beard trembled.

"I don't care. You shouldn't—"

"Aunty told me to say," remarked the Little Flower, "she told me, if you didn't seem grateful to Charley—to say she knew you pretty well, and if you'd do whatever he wanted, and keep her name out of it, she'd let you come back in the autumn and put the whole palace at your disposal, and make the Amanian Government pay all the expedition's expenses."

Dr. McReynolds's face cracked under the unusual contortions of a grin. "Throw the palace open to me?—the archives?"

"Every man has his price," thought Charley; "only the price of some's not a selfish one. I don't believe I'm called to tell him that the Sultan's Government has been shot at sunrise—not just yet."

AT ELEVEN o'clock the next morning, he sat in the deserted palm-garden of the Hôtel Beau Rivage, and coughed over his weak *café au lait* and his strong Trichinopoli cigar. He never could stand the French custom of breakfasting in bed; Jennie and the professor did not share his prejudice.

The beat had darted along the cable, via Martinique, upon his arrival. He had thought he could write it in fifteen minutes, there was a crazy typewriter in the office; timing the historic event, he wrote it in 12.5. It was prefaced by this query:

Johnson, *Gazette*,
Hollidaysburg, Kansas.

Will you renew offer job if following exclusive makes good?

And it concluded:

Kansas's distinguished savant, however, sets glory of our Wufford above personal resentment. Declares he will not take up his case with State Department, but on contrary hopes to come to such amicable agreement Amanian authorities as be able to return in autumn and consummate another startling discovery with their assistance.

"When he finds out there's a new set of authorities," Charley ruminated above his glass of coffee, "he'll—well, I'll turn that job over to Jennie."

"Light of the Morning!"

Hassan the faithless bowed before him.

"*Coupez cela!*"

"If your Magnificence but knew how his servant regretted to have to leave him—"

"*Conservez-le!*"

"But I bring his Magnificence a letter from his Supreme Highness."

He held it out—an informal scrawl:

My dear Mr. Buckwalter:

You put me dicky, but your mistake has been explained to me and I want you to know that I don't hold it against you. I told you that tarradiddle wouldn't deceive a certain lady. Accept the blessings of another certain lady's recent guardian.

Sidi Yusef.

P.S.—And you really helped a jolly lot when you killed the cat.

"Hum," said Charley. For Hassan's brother, the captain of cavalry, and Jailer-General of Tarzut-el-Lakkaz, approached. "Yours, I'll bet, is from the ex-Sultana."

It read:

Dear Pupil:

Bon voyage and congratulations! Even when I asked you if you would trust me implicitly, I had no idea—you weren't very smart at school—that you could act your part so perfectly. You almost made me believe you doubted me. God bless you and your dear fiancée. Kiss her for her Aunt Sallie. It was sudden, but it had to be done to protect her, and to protect Sidi from himself. She says she likes you, and I know you and your folks. So it ought to be all right, but if you don't treat her well, young man, I'll somehow see that you hear from *me*.

Sarah, Imperatrix.

P.S.—My counter-revolution was as successful in the city as in the palace, so my husband's throne and mine is again secure. He has promised not to annoy me with any more marital dissipations if I don't replace that cat that your one piece of clumsiness disposed of.

S. I.

Proportionately as well rewarded as Joseph's brethren, the messengers withdrew when Jennie slipped in. Charley gave her both letters and waited till she read them.

"You see, I started out to help Sidi, and afterward, when I'd made up with your aunt, I thought she'd double-crossed me."

He had her free hand in both of his, and hers was very quiet.

"None of you appreciate her. But I thought that was the way it was with you," she said.

"I believe," said Charley, with a touch of doubt, "that you're another able and determined woman."

The sloe-eyes met his in adequate denial. "No, dear. I'm just a girl that wants—that wants you to succeed."

"I have succeeded; I've got you."

"I mean in your work."

"Oh, that! Well, there's another message, and you bet I know it by heart! It came an hour ago; it's from Johnson, the managing editor of the *Gazette*, and the best newspaper man in Kansas. It says: 'Good work; come back and take that job at twice the salary formerly offered.' So we sail by the next boat, Jennie. The Near East's all right, but 'westward the course of empire takes its way.' Here's John J. Ingalls's 'Opportunity':

"Fame, love and fortune on my footsteps wait!"

With a breath of admiration, she pressed, very lightly, her cheek against his shoulder.

"You *do* love me?"

"You know I do. Do *you* love *me?*"

"You know I do." She was silent, for a timid moment. Then she advanced her last remaining doubt. "But when they hear I've been engaged to a sultan, won't they all talk about me in Kansas?"

He looked at her, he blushed through his freckles and up to the roots of his riotous red hair. He had of course omitted her from his news-dispatch, just as he had omitted her aunt, but he had indulged in dreams of how his friends would envy him when they should be confidentially told that his wife could have married a sultan.

"No," he said, "they won't *all* talk about you—*none* of them, because I'll never say anything about it."

She little knew what a proof that promise was of his love for her, but she kissed him—and that, he realized, was far, far more than the sacrifice was worth.

The End

Onions

Every One, No Matter How Humble, Has His Supreme Moment—Even the Despised Ranch Cook. A Drama of the Rodeo

By Oscar Schisgall

Illustration by Albin Henning

THERE were two reasons to explain the fact that the world—his world—sneered upon him; two reasons which had damned him in its estimation even before his birth: one was his father; the other, his mother.

Lord, who ever heard of a combination worse than a Chinaman and a Mexican woman? Any man on the Sumner ranch would tell you with sincere emphasis that the mongrel son just couldn't be worth anything. It was against the laws of nature to suppose that he could be like other men—white-skinned, pure-blooded men. Impossible! His lineage was visible in everything he did, in every line of his features.

Consider his nose, for example—small, straight, sharply pointed—that came from his mother. Undeniably it was feminine, like the rest of his slim face; like the lips, too. They were full and red, entirely too red for a man. But the eyes were Chinese, strangely slanting oval slits ridiculously out of place in his dark-skinned countenance. They were his heritage from his father.

You could see his father in his body, too—wiry and supple and soft-footed, moving from kitchen to mess room with the quick, tapping steps of a panther. Ah, he was yellow, unmistakably! And in the few spots where the yellowness was not apparent, the Mexican slyness cropped out. Every one on the ranch would assure you that he was no good—absolutely no good.

The men were generous enough to confess that he did one thing better than any one else on Sumner's ranch, and that was cooking. His very name had grown from his culinary ability. Onions, he was called. Onions, the finest cook in the county. And yet—well, he was no good. His father was Chinese and his mother was Mexican.

For years Onions accepted his humility in silence. It became part of him, so that he ceased to feel hurt when he heard men speak of his ancestry. Moreover, he had learned to swallow insults without protesting; he seemed not to hear them. Somehow they belonged to his life, and they troubled him no more than his slanting eyes. He was accustomed to them.

But Onions was not accustomed to blows. And when they came, they brought into his existence an overpowering change. They transformed him from a meek, unresisting nonentity to a man whose soul blazed with lust for revenge. For the first time something within him rose in rebellion, something asserted itself. Perhaps it was pride.

It happened after the San Marese rodeo. The boys returned to the Sumner ranch in a most hilarious mood. They sang and yelled as they sprang down from their ponies, and tramped gleefully into the mess room. They were flushed, happy; and they gave the chair at the head of the table to Jock Crawford.

For Crawford had won fame at the rodeo. That afternoon, before a howling crowd of spectators, he had proved himself the ablest rider in the county. Not a bronco had been wild enough to throw him for five minutes; he had bulldogged a steer with greater speed than any other man present. And so Jock Crawford was the hero of the

Sumner ranch, and he was enjoying the rewards of heroism.

A big man, ruddy of face, he sat at the head of the table and grinned upon his fellows. His cheeks were fat and shiny, around a flat nose. His hair, red as a tropical sunset, lay in unkempt masses above his low forehead. For the last hour he had been too busy to brush dust from himself, so that his clothes—a brown shirt open at the collar, and loose chaps—were stained and discolored. But no one noticed it. Enough that Crawford had emerged victorious from the rodeo. He deserved worship.

He obtained it, too. He was veritably intoxicated with his triumph, and his deep voice roared cheerily as he called:

"Hey, Onions! Bring on that ham, you shriveling quarter-breed! Want us all to starve?"

He received no answer; but after a few moments Onions appeared in the kitchen door, a huge tray balanced on his hands. The little man wore a black shirt buttoned tightly around his neck, and snugly fitting trousers of some strange material which reflected the light of the falling sun. Softly he hastened into the mess room and began distributing the savory dishes.

When Crawford received his portion, he squinted at it quizzically. Then he tasted it with the infinite pains of a connoisseur. His frown deepened. And he spoke, not because he meant to scold Onions, but rather because he felt that in this hour of triumph he had assumed the duty of entertaining the boys with sharp witticisms. They would appreciate his humor, and applaud it.

"Hey, you lightweight heathen! What kind of ham do you call this?"

Onions paused in surprise. His brows arched over the oval eyes.

"What is, Mr. Crawford?" he murmured.

"What is? Why, this ham never came from a pig! What'd you do, kill a horse? It's worse than leather—that's what is!"

Quickly Onions approached him and bent over his plate. He stared dully at the steaming meat, stared at Jock Crawford, stared at the other men. Then he said:

"The ham is fresh. Nothing the matter."

It was a stab at his pride to intimate that anything was amiss with the products of his cooking, and Onions was prepared to defend himself. He had never intentionally served anything bad.

"I tell you," Crawford insisted loudly, "that you boiled your old shoes, that's what! Never tasted anything worse in my life."

At this information Onions winced. He could not believe the man, but for a second doubt flashed into his mind. Perhaps something *was* wrong. There was no harm in ascertaining the truth. He did an unwise thing.

He stooped to Crawford's plate in order to smell the meat.

THE gesture changed his life. For the big Crawford, in sudden and real fury, jumped up and pushed Onions powerfully across the room so that he collided heavily with the wall.

"Keep your face out of my plate, you yellow pup! Want me to get sick? Expect me to eat that after you've had your rotten breath all over it? Take that ham away!"

Onions gaped while his hand slowly rubbed the elbow which had pounded against the wall. His knees sagged in a way which caused him to appear to be cowering.

The men about the table had stopped eating. They were silent, watching with wide eyes. It was easy to understand Crawford's attitude. He considered the breath, in truth, the very proximity of Onions, unclean. It was a paradoxical belief, of course, since it overlooked the fact that Onions had prepared the dish.

He stood leaning against the table and glowering at the dazed cook.

"Take this back to your garbage can and bring me another helping!" demanded Crawford. "Show some speed. You're not going to a funeral—yet!"

Slowly Onions straightened. He swallowed hard. His pride revolted at the implication that anything was wrong with the food.

"What is, Mr. Crawford?" he asked again. "Why you hit me?"

The big man almost thundered his reply:

"Why? You shivering yellow pup, do you think I'll eat it after you've shoved your face into it? Take it out!"

"My face is clean," protested Onions softly.

With an exclamation Crawford turned toward his fellow diners. He addressed them with all the pomp of a banquet speaker, and his words produced several smiles.

"Will you listen to the cook giving me an argument?" he said in mocking surprise. "Will you listen to him? His face is clean! What do you know about that? The gentleman refuses to change my food!" Once more he glared at Onions, his voice suddenly domineering. "Say, you whimpering pup! Grab that plate and get into your kitchen! And no more back talk!"

"But, Mr. Crawford, the ham—"

Two strides brought the heavy winner of the rodeo to Onions's side. A huge hand gripped the cook's collar, dragged him to the table. He was commanded to pick up the dish, and he obeyed. Then, with force and precision, he was pushed unceremoniously toward the kitchen door. Laughter followed him—and Crawford's foot which placed an impelling kick upon his shins.

Onions stumbled into the kitchen. His cheeks were burning, his heart pounding. He said nothing. With trembling hands he served a fresh portion of ham to Jock Crawford, and with trembling hands he finished bearing dinner to the laughing, jesting boys around the mess-room table. Not once did he speak. The few gibes which were hurled at him he did not notice. His mind was focused on the indignity and pain inflicted by Jock Crawford.

From his slanting eyes he glared at the big man often, and within him something shrieked for vengeance. His small fists doubled in the kitchen, and his lips quivered, and tears welled to his eyes. Not tears of pain, for the physical torture was negligible; but tears of anguish as he realized the truth of his own weakness. There was no way to avenge himself; no way.

After dinner he stood before a rather antiquated sink and washed dishes. He was breathing heavily, and occasionally he paused while his long fingers twined about the apron which shielded his black clothes. At such times he stared at the wall and mumbled.

OF A sudden he was conscious of some one behind him. Quickly he glanced over his shoulder, then nodded and resumed cleaning the dishes.

A young man leaned against the door. He was slender and tall, puffing languidly on a cigarette and toying with the strap of his broad sombrero. The Greaser, he was called, because it was scarcely two years since he had crossed the Mexican border to seek employment on American soil. Of all the men on the ranch, he alone refrained from mocking Onions—doubtless in deference to the Mexican blood in the cook's veins.

"I saw the way Crawford hit you," he said quietly.

Onions frowned.

"Did it hurt?" the Greaser continued.

The query caused Onions to whirl around, scowling. He answered almost savagely:

"Hurt? Not my leg—not my body—no. But here"—he beat a hand against his chest—"here it hurt! Inside!"

Puffing slowly, the Greaser nodded.

"I understand," he said. "But you mustn't mind too much, Onions. Crawford was drunk, crazy, today. He won at the rodeo. The judges gave him first prize."

A sneer parted Onions's full lips. "That make him drunk, hey? That make him proud?"

"Of course. He's the best rider in the county—best bronco buster, anyway. He was excited and—"

"And he let it out on me! I see! All right—all right—some day I fix Mr. Crawford for that. I fix him!"

The Greaser smiled tolerantly as he flicked ashes to the floor.

"Don't be foolish," he advised mildly. "You're not strong enough to beat him in a fight. And if you try anything else—a knife or a gun—the boys know a way of putting a rope around your neck. No, don't be foolish, Onions."

"Oh, but I fix him—some way. I see how by and by. Wait!"

He turned back to his dishes and applied himself energetically to his task. And the Greaser, shaking his head in comprehending pity, moved out of the door. But he called back:

"Don't try rough stuff, Onions, or the boys will get you."

Onions did not answer. Furiously he was rubbing a rag over the sticky dishes. Some day, some way . . .

Inspiration flashed upon him even before the last dish was dried. He stopped, a towel dangling from his hand. He gazed unseeing at the wall before him. Into the slits that were his eyes a strange light flowed; his lips moved in a mysterious smile. Then he stood erect, his shoulders bravely squared.

Everybody's Magazine, June, 1924

So Jock Crawford was the champion bronco buster in the county! His bombastic pride rested on his achievement at the rodeo, did it? Then—then—if he could be humiliated in that—if his laurels could be torn away from him—if the yellow pup could defeat him . . .

It required skill and practice. But—but—

Onions drew a sharp, deep breath. His chin pressed down on his chest, his eyes glittered. Madly he rubbed at the last dish, and his red lips belched the words:

"All right, Mr. Crawford, all right! You wait! I fix you!"

ONIONS did not contemplate entering an entirely new and untested field of endeavor. For such a step he was not sufficiently courageous. But in thinking of rodeos, he was merely recalling his past.

Long ago, when he was scarcely eighteen and weighed ninety-seven pounds, Onions had earned his first few dollars as a jockey at Tía Juana. He never forgot those glorious days: mobs screaming hoarsely about him, winds hissing as he tore through them, horse wet with sweat and frothing, plunging along the sweeping track. He had been called Chink in those times, and he could remember hearing a thousand voices shriek:

"Come on, Chink! Bring him in—*bring him in!*"

The other jockeys had hated him. They had pointed to his eyes and laughed and called him a vicious name because, as was commonly rumored among them, his Chinese father had never troubled to honor his Mexican mother by marriage.

This Onions had resented. True, he had never known his father, but his mother had been his companion until the miserable day when, stretched on a broken cot in a battered shack, she had succumbed to fever. The insults of the jockeys gnawed into his sensibilities. And so one day he walked straight to the grinning speaker and drove his fist against the boy's mouth. A spurt of blood—a startled cry . . .

Eight cursing jockeys threw themselves upon Onions. They beat him, kicked him, choked him. They dragged him through a puddle of soggy mud and pressed his face into the slime until he was almost strangled. Not until he had lapsed into unconsciousness was their lust satiated, and then they threw him contemptuously into a stall.

After that Onions had skulked away from the track. He was no match, he knew only too well, for the combined forces of his rival jockeys; there was no way in which he could protect himself from their insults—and insults would be flung at him at every possible occasion now. So he gathered his few belongings into a blanket, knotted the bundle over his shoulder, and at dawn trudged out of Tía Juana.

He had been a good jockey; he understood horses; and now, thinking of Jock Crawford's feat at the rodeo, Onions evolved a plan for unusual revenge. It was revenge based upon humiliating the big white man. . . .

That very night, when the men had all gone to sleep, he stole carefully out of the kitchen door. Crouching, he moved rapidly across a field. A full moon was shining upon him, throwing a short shadow at his side, and a breeze floating across the plains lent him courage. He was glad that the corral was so far from the Sumner house, for the hoof beats of horses would not be heard, would not rouse any of the sleepers.

He smiled queerly as he went, and occasionally he glanced over his shoulder at the darkened house. Once, visioning the future, he even chuckled; his oval eyes narrowed to thin slits as he grinned in anticipation of a great day.

At the corral fence he stopped. In corners he saw, revealed by the moonlight, the huddled bodies of many horses, but he shook his head. He walked a little farther until he reached another corral, somewhat smaller than the first, and containing but one horse.

And at this bronco Onions gazed intently.

The men called the beast Monster, and they had been given cause for the appellation. Not a wilder horse was to be found in the county. He had thrown every man who had ever attempted to ride him, including the big Jock Crawford. He had been subjected to the same treatment as other broncos, but still he remained untamed, fiery, proud of his wildness. Now, as he stood in the center of the corral, he held his head high, ears raised, and eyed Onions.

"You and me, Monster—we have some fun together from now on," murmured the little man.

It seemed as if the horse understood. He pawed the ground, then pranced about the corral, haughtily displaying his sleek black-and-white spotted body. In his canter lay a veritable challenge.

"All right," said Onions, "all right. You wait."

He peered along the fence. On a stake he saw a saddle and a bridle; and under them, on the ground, lay the coils of a lariat. Here the men came in idle moments and risked their bones in the futile efforts to ride Monster. For reasons which no one could explain, old Mr. Sumner had not permitted the horse to be used in the San Marese rodeo. "Next year," he had promised, "if he's still wild, you can have him. Not now—not now."

UNTIL this day Monster had taken heavy fees from the daring riders who had mounted him. One broken leg and a half-dozen cracked ribs among various ambitious horsemen testified to his wildness. But Onions was not afraid. He knew horses.

"You and me," he repeated, "you and me, Monster. We have fun, hey?"

And Monster, emitting a sharp neigh, trotted around the corral.

In the use of the lariat Onions was neither experienced nor confident. But he climbed the fence, twisted one thin leg safely about a bar, and threw the noose. It missed its moving mark. He tried again and again, failing dismally. But at last, after dozens of casts, he succeeded in roping the horse.

Quite jubilantly he pulled Monster toward the stake and fastened him. And then came the task of saddling the horse.

Monster danced, kicked, reared. He tugged at the rope which bound him to the stake, snorted. But Onions, quick of foot, managed to dodge a score of vicious kicks as he tightened the belly band.

"Steady!" he whispered continuously. "Steady—steady!"

It took him fully fifteen minutes to force the bit between Monster's snarling teeth, but finally even that was accomplished. Then Onions stepped back, wiping the perspiration from his brow. He squinted once at the moon, smiled, and gave his attention to Monster.

"You listen," he commanded quietly. "I'm going to ride you, savvy? I ain't afraid of you—no! I untie you and jump on you and then—go on, do what you like!"

The horse reared, but when he came to earth, Onions placed one foot in a stirrup. He gripped the pommel of the saddle while one hand, with a sudden jerk, lifted the lariat over the top of the fence stake. Monster was free, and Onions swung himself up into the saddle.

He stayed there about two seconds. Uttering a sharp snort, Monster arched his back, flew up into the air—and Onions, moving in a graceful arc, landed on hands and knees some ten feet away.

Stunned, he turned slowly. From a sitting posture he gaped stupidly at the horse. He shook his head as though to cast off a stupor. Again he blinked at the beast. If a horse can laugh scornfully, Monster did. He stood still, watching the unfortunate rider, waiting. . . .

"Golly!" exclaimed Onions, breathless. "You *can* buck! . . . Well, we try again. Come on, Monster!"

He rose, somewhat unsteadily. The lariat, still noosed about the horse's neck, lay on the ground, and Onions had little difficulty in capturing it. He drew Monster close to himself, dodged and jumped as the horse pranced dangerously, and with a quick, courageous leap he managed to spring once more into the saddle.

This time he dug his knees into the horse's side, lay low on his neck, hung tightly. Monster rose in the air, back arched—but landed with the rider still in the saddle. He tried again, and failed. He snorted savagely. Something was wrong. The little man should not remain unseated!

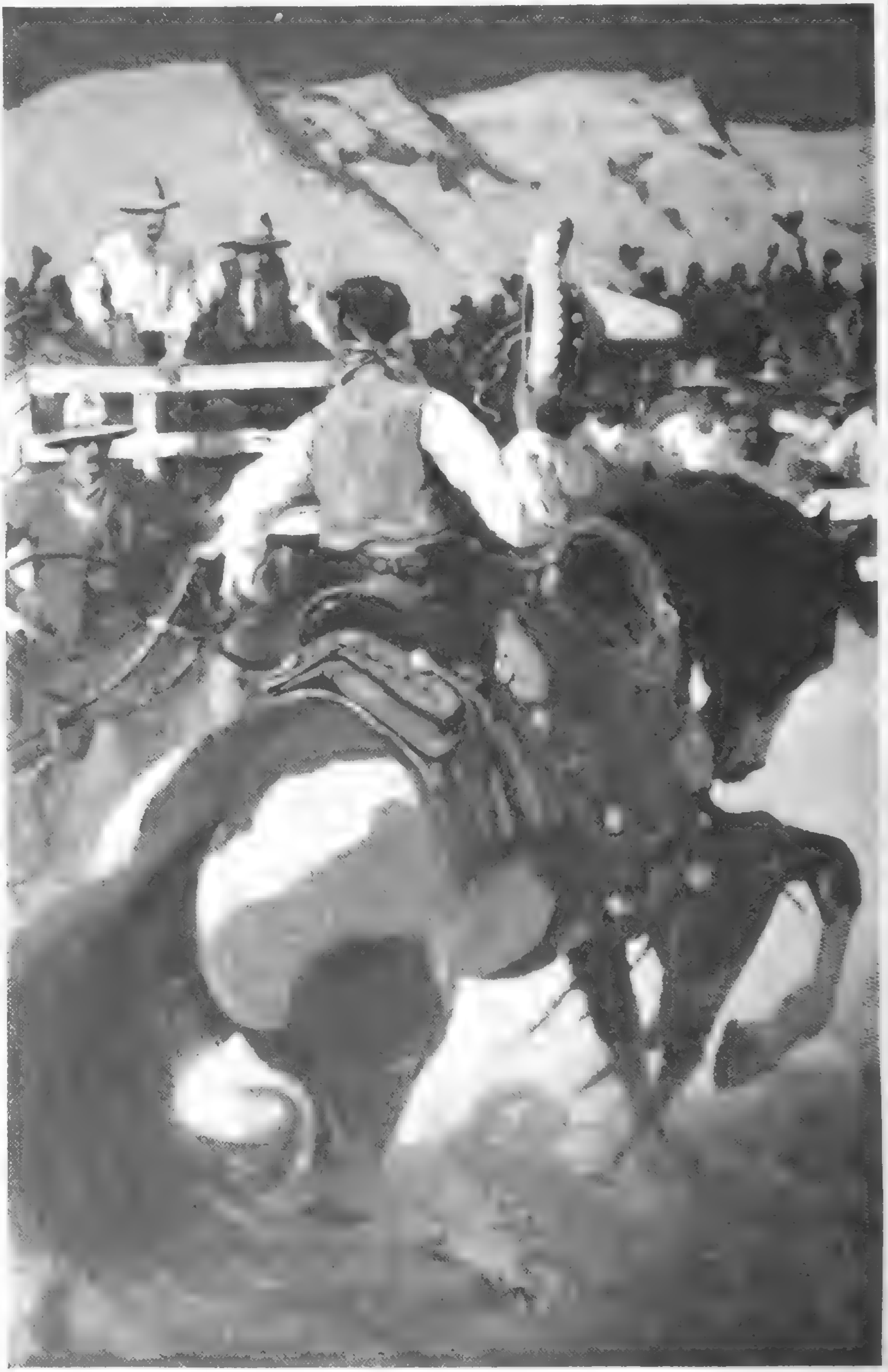
He reared, but Onions clung to the saddle desperately. Then, in real rage, Monster threw himself against the fence—intending shrewdly to smash the rider's leg against the bars. But the leg was raised, and there was no result!

Now Monster, in growing fury, tried another trick. He rose on his forelegs, while his hind hoofs kicked high into the air. The grip on his back loosened. He came to the ground trembling, and cocked a red eye at the heap in the dirt twenty feet away.

PAINFULLY Onions rose, rubbed his knees. He was suffering, but a smile covered his features.

"All right," he said, "all right. I stuck longer that time, Monster. I stuck almost a minute, hey? All right. I told you we

Everybody's Magazine, June, 1924



Lightly Onions leaped into the saddle. And, wonder of wonders, the horse did not dash away. . . . Obeying Onions's command, Monster trotted around the field.

have fun. You—you hurt me a little that time, boy, but I don't care. I come back again tomorrow—every night. Some day I ride you well. Wait! You see! . . . And then we fix Mr. Crawford, hey? Oh, yes! Wait, Monster, wait!"

Again he drew the horse to himself. But this time he did not mount the quivering beast. Instead, he loosened the saddle and the bridle, pulled off the lariat; and after depositing them in their accustomed places, he started home—limping slightly.

Monster, peering between the bars of the fence at his receding form, neighed softly.

As he trudged across the moonlit field, Onions repeated to himself:

"I come back every night—every night. Some day I ride him—wait. Some day! Then, Mr. Crawford, we show you something! . . ."

He did come back every night—for many days. When every one on the Sumner ranch slept, long after midnight, he crept stealthily out of the back door, and hurried across the field to the corral.

After a while Monster began to expect him, to await him. It was strange, but the horse seemed to be enjoying its contest with the man. No longer did Monster object to being caught in the noose of the lariat and pulled to the stake; indeed, he began to come of his own accord when Onions appeared. He was ready for the battle, anxious for it. Perhaps to him it was a nightly diversion.

He fought and bucked and reared and dashed about as madly as ever in his efforts to unseat the light rider. But as the days passed, Onions lengthened the minutes he could remain in the saddle.

Every night for weeks he visited the corral, never quite conquering Monster, but steadily developing his own riding ability. Then, of a sudden, he could not mount the horse for a fortnight.

It happened when he hurtled unexpectedly against the fence. He had been thrown by a powerful lunge ending in an abrupt stop. Onions sailed through the air, hit a bar of the fence, and collapsed—severely spraining his ankle.

The pain was horrible. For a while he lay half unconscious; when he opened his eyes feebly he was astonished to see Monster's head just above his own, the horse's breath fanning his face. A soft neigh came from the beast—a strange, unusual sound. And Onions understood.

Smiling weakly, he whispered:

"All right, Monster, all right. I see you're sorry. Sure, you're sorry. I know. We're good friends now, hey? Very good friends. Sure. You hurt me—but that's nothing, Monster, that's nothing. Part of the game, hey? Sure. You're sorry. I know."

Gripping the fence, he struggled frantically to lift himself to his feet. The pangs of his ankle were furious; they shot through him, made him gasp and moan. He could stand on but one leg.

The horse did not move while he drew off the saddle. Onions smiled again, and patted the long face.

"Good boy, Monster, good boy! We friends now, hey? Sure."

He squeezed between the bars and started home.

HE LIED to old man Sumner in the morning. He declared that he had fallen down the kitchen steps during the night. And so a physician was summoned, and one of the boys was appointed cook—at which occupation he proved himself decidedly unsatisfactory. Even Jock Crawford, digging his teeth through a tough piece of steak, was forced to confess:

"He may be yellow and a quarter-breed, but that Onions is the only cook for me! Yes, sirree!"

An entire week passed before Onions could resume his duties in the kitchen. After a fortnight he could walk quite well; and then at midnight he went out to the corral. His heart leaped with joy as he saw Monster—Monster, suddenly alert, ears raised; Monster trotting to the fence, peering questioningly through the darkness; Monster neighing in real happiness as he recognized the wiry little rider.

Onions patted his nose.

"I'm better now, my friend, much better. But not good enough to ride you yet. A few days more—a few days more. Then I come back and we start the game again, hey? Sure. This—it is only a visit to show you I'm all right. Good night, Monster. Don't worry about me."

He returned to the house, highly elated. He felt overwhelming confidence in himself. He *knew* he would master the wild bronco! He could not, however, test himself again

Everybody's Magazine, June, 1924

for several days. The ankle was still tender, though he tried to strengthen it by walking across the fields after work every evening.

Then, one night, having walked far, he threw himself on the ground and leaned against the trunk of a sturdy tree. The soft light of the moon did not penetrate the overhanging leaves, so that Onions lay in blackness. Dreaming, he lifted his face to the breeze and closed his eyes.

And presently he heard voices—two voices, one of which made him catch his breath. He glanced up apprehensively.

Walking toward him slowly came a man and a woman. The bridles of two horses were slung over the man's arm; the horses themselves trailed the couple lazily.

Onions recognized the man immediately—Jock Crawford. The identity of the woman he could guess, for there had been much giggling talk among the fellows at the ranch about Jock and his Alice Tepper.

Crawford's tones were low, but they floated distinctly across the night silence.

"Of course I could stay on the ranch," the big man was saying, "and I guess I can get the foreman's job next year. Maybe that'll be enough for you and me to live on, and maybe not. But the circus, Alice—that's an offer! Fifty a week to ride a bronco, and all expenses paid! Gee! Girl, if you say the word—"

Alice Tepper, walking slowly, stared at the ground.

"No," she answered. "It isn't worth it, Jock. I'd rather you'd take the foreman's job and—stay here. I don't mind—being economical—for a while. Honest!"

Onions felt extremely uncomfortable. He realized that he was listening to a conversation which was not intended for his ears, but now he could not decide what to do. If he rose out of the darkness, Crawford would know that he had heard; if he remained there, motionless, the burly puncher might see him. Then . . .

He drew himself close to the protecting blackness of the tree as Crawford and the girl stopped within a few yards of him. The horses, lowering their heads, began to graze. It was a breathless moment for the little cook; uncertainty concerning the proper procedure held him paralyzed.

"Fifty a week," Crawford was saying, "would mean a lot to you and me, Alice. Of course we'd have to travel along with the circus folks, but, gee! I'd have to work only a few minutes a day. Once in the afternoon and once in the evening. Just riding a bronco while people applaud. The rest of the time I could be with you."

Alice shook her head.

"It might be nice, Jock, but I'd rather stay here. It's—cleaner. Ever since you got the prize at the rodeo—oh, Jock, don't let it turn your head!"

"I'm not. Still—still—sti—"

OF A sudden Crawford dropped conversation. He was peering through the blackness toward the tree. He lowered his head, scowled. Something had moved.

"Who's that?" he called quickly, stepping forward.

Onions, pale and frightened, rose awkwardly. He moved toward the big man, rubbed his hands along his narrow trousers, and muttered sheepishly:

"Sorry, Mr. Crawford; sorry. Didn't know you were coming, Mr. Crawford. I wasn't listening—"

The puncher began an oath, but choked it as he remembered the girl at his side. Two powerful strides brought him to Onions's face. He glowered down into the fearful features of the cook.

"So you're sneaking around, prying into private affairs, hey? You yellow pup!" he whispered fiercely, so that Alice Tepper could not distinguish the words. "I ought to break your other leg!"

"But, Mr. Crawford—"

"If you were sprawling there, why didn't you say you were around, instead of staying there, spying into my business?"

"I didn't have a chance, Mr. Crawford—"

"You didn't, hey? Well, here's your chance! Get back to the house—and get *pronto!*"

A big hand grasped Onions's arm. He was pushed toward the house—pushed so powerfully that he tripped and almost fell to the ground. A wave of resentment swept over him. In that moment he could have hurled himself madly upon the big man; but something restrained him, restrained the flow of invectives which surged up in his throat, only to be pressed back. He breathed heavily.

"Get!" snapped Crawford. "No more back talk!"

"All right!" said Onions tensely. "All right! I get, Mr. Crawford. Don't you worry—I get!"

He marched away rapidly, angrily. His thin brows were drawn down in a furious frown. His chin was lowered. Not once did he look back to the couple. Doggedly he trudged on, not toward the house, but toward the corral.

Monster came to greet him as usual, but he must have been amazed by the harshness of Onions's voice.

"My foot still hurts, Monster, but I don't care! I ride you tonight, understand? *I ride you!* You can't throw me off, my friend! I ride you!"

He scarcely noticed the docility with which Monster permitted the saddle to be thrown over him, and the bit to be thrust between his teeth. In truth, the horse was glad to have Onions back; once more the battle was on; once more the nightly diversions would begin.

He stood motionless while Onions, gasping with sudden pain as he held the weight of his body for an instant on the injured foot, pulled himself up into the saddle. Then he poised himself, flattened his ears, lowered his neck, and—

Monster rose high in the air and landed on all fours. But his rider, seemingly glued to him, did not move. There was grim determination in Onions this night. Rage against Crawford lent him desperate courage, and he clung to the horse as he would have clung to life.

Monster dashed about the corral, attempted every trick he knew. He reared, rose on his forelegs, threw himself against the fence, bucked wildly into the air—and still Onions remained in the saddle. The horse dropped to the ground, rolled over on his back, but the buster had sprung nimbly from the saddle; and when Monster rose again, Onions was on his back as he had been before the shrewd move. . . .

It was a great battle—and the last one between them. For fully twenty minutes they fought, the brutality and trickery of the bronco pitted against the skill and endurance and quickness of the man. And at the end of twenty minutes Monster stood in the center of the corral, not daring to move.

He trembled; sweat and froth gave his spotted body a glistening appearance in the moonlight. He panted painfully, filled with amazement and perhaps admiration for the little man who still sat in the saddle.

Monster was, for a time, puzzled. Never had Onions conquered him, but now—now—

A horse knows when he is beaten. And Monster had lost. . . .

Quite willingly he obeyed the soft words of the rider and pranced quietly about the corral. For a while he was nervous; he raised his legs high, like a well-trained coach horse. But mellow words came to his ears, soothing words, and soon he was calm.

Onions rode about the corral for a few minutes, in order to gain confidence and to show Monster that there was nothing to fear. As he rode, great joy caused his heart to pound. He could ride Monster! He was ready to humiliate Crawford! Soon, soon . . .

He patted the horse's face before he left the corral, then hurried across the moonlit field. He limped noticeably, but no longer did he mind the pain. It was insignificant in comparison with the glee resulting from his accomplishment.

As he sat on the edge of his cot, before going to sleep, he smiled mysteriously at the wall; and his full, red lips formed the words:

"All right, Mr. Crawford! You wait! I hate you—hate you! And I show you something!"

THE weeks and months rolled around until they again approached the annual San Marese rodeo. As the day drew near, Onions became impatient and nervous. He spoke to no one, unless conversation was inescapable. His thoughts were focused on one thing—the rodeo. There he intended to crush the pride of the blatant white man, Jock Crawford.

He did not, however, surrender his intimacy with Monster; oh, no! Every night for months he went out to the corral and rode the horse. There were no more struggles, and Monster never attempted to unseat his rider. He had found his master; like the women of the cave days, he submitted unquestioningly to his conqueror.

Everybody's Magazine, June, 1924

Onions grew bold, after a time, and permitted Monster to come out of the corral. At night, when all possible witnesses were asleep, they galloped away over the fields, and returned before dawn. Their friendship was sound and unbreakable. It seemed, at various occasions, that the horse actually understood the monologues of his rider, for he would neigh and prance. But never did he buck.

Still he was Monster the Wild. For no other man on the ranch could remain on his back. Oh, Onions understood the privilege he was enjoying. Often, as he peeled potatoes in the kitchen, he would stare out of the window at the corral. There he could see some of the boys endeavoring to master the horse; but invariably they were hurled off through the air. Even Jock Crawford found himself groveling in the dust quite frequently. Monster was, to them, untamable.

Onions, looking into his pots, would laugh silently and shake his shoulders.

"That horse, he mine," he told himself in triumph. "Only I ride him. Nobody else. You wait, Mr. Crawford!"

Another few weeks and—the San Marese rodeo.

It was a gala affair, the most distinguished event of the year in the entire county. Tents were erected around the small town, and vivid banners floated above them. Ice-cream stands rose from nowhere to cool parched throats. Hundreds of strangers arrived at the field fenced off for the occasion. And every one was jubilantly happy.

On the morning of the glorious day Onions went to see the Greaser. He found the man near the corral, saddling his horse, and spoke at once.

"You got old clothes, something to sell?"

Slowly the Greaser turned, pulling a cigarette from his lips.

"Hey? What's that?"

"You got old clothes, maybe? I buy. I got some money."

An irrepressible laugh came from the Greaser. He straightened in frank interest.

"What do you want with old clothes?"

"I go to San Marese today—like everybody else. I want other pants, other shirt."

Quizzically the Greaser inspected Onions's costume—tightly fitting trousers and black shirt. He shrugged.

"Sure, I've got some old chaps and a shirt, I guess. But—"

"I buy. Ten dollars."

In amazement the Mexican blinked. His old outfit was worth nothing. No one else would ever dream of purchasing it.

"Ten dollars?" he stammered.

"Yes."

"Sold!"

Later in the morning Onions saw Monster led away. The horse was to be used in the bucking contest, and surely a more ferocious beast could not have been chosen. But Onions smiled wisely.

He walked to San Marese after his luncheon duties had been completed. In his new clothes—brown chaps and a khaki shirt open at the throat, and a battered sombrero—he felt pompously important. His slanting eyes looked happily over the landscape and visioned the triumph he expected—soon. Once he even whistled, but he decided that he had better preserve his breath for the long walk to the town.

WHEN he arrived among the tents, his heart pounded furiously. He saw no one. The crowd had gone to witness the contests in the appointed field, and Onions went there, too.

He found the mob—yelling, cheering, applauding, as they thronged about the fence. The din frightened him. He shrank from the prospect of performing before all these howling masses. But the thought of Crawford encouraged him.

A bulldogging competition was in progress. He walked away and sat alone behind a tent, waiting for the bronco-busting to be announced. Tired by the walk to San Marese, he was grateful for this opportunity to rest, and he sat still for almost an hour—meanwhile toying with a colorful bandanna he had brought. Two queer holes had been cut in that bandanna.

At last he heard the announcer's stentorian voice bellowing through a megaphone:

"Bronco - busting contest! Bro-onco-o bu-usting co-ontest! Open to all men! Prize is a silver stirrup and a purse of one hundred dollars! Everybody welcome! Ride Monster—the Sumner terror! Entrants register now with the judges!"

Quivering, Onions sprang to his feet. With shaking hands he tied the bandanna about his face, so that the two holes served as windows for his eyes. Oh, he had planned his victory dramatically! It would be a memorable thing! Often riders came to rodeos incognito, even masked. It added interest for the spectators.

Onions tightened his belt, swelled his chest. Then he strode forward, broke through the crowd, climbed the fence of the inclosure, and advanced to the judges' stand.

His whole being trembled as he passed before the eyes of the crowd. He could hear them murmur in surprise as he walked, face hidden.

"Another one of them masked marvels—maybe!" somebody shouted, jeering.

"Yeah—maybe!" came an answer from the opposite side of the field.

Head held high, Onions strode before the small stand reserved for the men who would judge the abilities of the contesting riders. Masked, he faced them boldly. And why should he not be bold now? They could not see his slanting eyes. . . .

He registered last—immediately after Jock Crawford loudly announced his own name, and received an ovation of cheers. Last year's champion was not forgotten. Indeed, in the surreptitious betting among the men, he was the unrivaled favorite. Had the odds not been attractive, there would have been no wagers against him.

Only four punchers entered the competition—and Onions, the cook, offered the fifth entry.

"What's the name?" bellowed the judge, leaning over the side of the stand.

Shaky of voice, Onions looked up through the holes of his mask.

"Call me—Mask."

"Mask what?"

"Mask—Yellow."

"Hey?"

"Mask Yellow—that's me."

"Fool name," grunted the judge; "but you mysterious fellers always act foolish. All right, Mask Yellow, you ride last."

Monster, savage and fiery, was brought out. A murmur arose among the spectators, then a roar of admiration as the first man saddled the horse after a few futile attempts. He mounted—and was promptly hurled completely over the fence into the gaping crowd.

Everybody's Magazine, June, 1924

Laughter and jeers were his reward. Meekly he disappeared, leaving the field to others.

According to the rules of the rodeo, each rider had to saddle the bronco before mounting; the second contestant, after dislodging Monster's saddle, reattached it. But his fortune was little better than that of his predecessor. The instant the horse was freed, he astonished the rider by falling to the ground, rolling over, and pinning the man's leg under him.

A few feminine gasps accompanied the procession which bore the valiant, but wounded, knight off the field of combat.

When the third rider appeared, he was greeted warmly. Several years before he had won a championship, but years and increasing dissipation must have battered his stamina, for he did not approach his ordeal like a master horseman. In truth, he seemed timid, somewhat frightened.

Monster must have noticed the man's condition, for he reared almost joyously. Doubtless he foresaw an easy victory.

But the former champion remained in the saddle for two full minutes. Not until a forward charge terminating in a sudden stop sent him hurtling over the horse's head did he meet defeat. Then, in a forlorn huddle, he waved his hand toward Jock Crawford.

The crowd applauded and yelled mightily.

From his corner, the masked Onions watched excitedly. He was leaning slightly forward, breathing hard, his eyes gleaming under the bandanna. Never had he seen Monster as furious as he had been with the last three riders. Even now the horse was trembling, perspiring so that his black-and-white sleek body shone. Four men were holding him while Crawford loosed the saddle.

To readjust the leather seat was not difficult for the champion, but he was forced to work hard in order to press the bit between Monster's teeth. At last, however, even that was done, and the rider was ready.

ACKNOWLEDGING the shrieks of the crowd with a bow and a smile, Crawford poised himself. And the bronco, too, stood poised, ready to do battle the second he felt the champion's weight on his back.

A shout—Crawford leaped—four men

scattered from Monster's head—and the struggle was on.

Onions, his heart thundering, watched. He heard Crawford scream:

"Yi-i-i-p! Yip! Yip! Yip! Yee-eeah! Yi-i-i-ip!"

He saw Crawford's hat slap down on the bronco's flank, saw the horse dash across the field, come to an unexpected stop. But the champion still sat in the saddle.

Back arched, Monster rose and fell a dozen times—vainly. He snorted, stamped. He plunged against the fence, but failed to crush Crawford's side. He rolled over on his back—and rose with Crawford still on him.

Undeniably the rider was an admirable horseman, a remarkable horseman. The yells of the crowd, the wild screams of the women—all cheered him. And he continued to beat his hat down upon the bronco's flank while he shouted and retained his seat. But his left hand was tugging frantically at the bridle.

Then Monster displayed his true wildness. He could not bear to be conquered by this man; he had been conquered once, and he did not intend to surrender a second time in his life!

HIGH into the air he kicked his hind legs—so high that he lost his balance and fell. He rolled over, kicking his legs into the dust, seeking his enemy. Then he jumped up. Crawford had slid half-way out of the saddle!

Monster plunged forward madly, dashed against the fence again, whirled around, kicked, and bucked high, fully four feet off the ground. He landed squarely on all legs, with a fearful jolt. And as Crawford sought his balance, the horse dropped to the ground, cast its rider off, and leaped up—*free!*

"Three and a half minutes!" cried one of the judges.

Wildly the crowd applauded. It had been a marvelous demonstration of skill. Surely, Crawford was a champion worthy of the name. As he rose, a dozen hands slapped his back in congratulatory enthusiasm, and he was marched off, a hero.

Onions glanced nervously toward the judges.

"Mask Yellow!" the deep voice announced.

The light figure ran eagerly across the field to the horse. Again Monster, trembling pitifully, was held by four men. Again he awaited the next enemy.

Onions went to him—and stopped suddenly. Through the bandanna he gaped at Monster's mouth, and a great anguish shot through him.

For blood was streaming from the ends of the bit! Crawford's great strength had torn the steel through the bronco's flesh!

There was a queer helplessness about the slim body of Onions as he turned toward the judges. His voice cried tremulously.

"Can't ride him! He's hurt!"

"Hey?" shouted the judge. "What's that?"

"Can't ride this horse. He's hurt! Look—the bit—it tore through! He—he's suffering!"

"Suffering? Why, you—if you want to ride, get on! Don't talk! Give you two minutes to decide!"

Onions looked at the wound in Monster's flesh, and he shuddered. How could he torture his friend with that bit? How? . . . Crawford had done that! Oh, how he hated the man, detested him!

Onions considered quickly. He couldn't ride poor Monster now, he couldn't bear the thought of keeping a bit in that wound. Resolutely he faced the judges.

But some one in the crowd jeered loudly.

"Masked marvel, hey? Ya-ah! Masked coward, that's what! His name is Yellow and it's a good name for him!"

Under the mask Onions flushed. He glared toward the spot where Crawford stood among his comrades—and Crawford was grinning.

"All right!" suddenly yelled Onions. "I ride! I'm not afraid! Watch! Watch me ride!"

He whirled around to the horse, pulled off the saddle, drew out the painful bridle with its bit. Then, to conform with the regulations, he replaced the saddle—but *not the bridle!*

Again he turned to the judges. A sudden silence dropped over the spectators as they listened. And Onions cried clearly:

"That horse, he's hurt! The bit cut him! Crawford—he hurt him! But you want me to ride. All right, everybody. I ride. But—*I ride without a bridle!* I don't put that bit back! Watch!"

Once more he stood before Monster.

To the four men who held the horse, he said curtly:

"Go away! Don't need you! Leave the horse and me together!"

They were frankly puzzled, eying each other as though a madman had addressed them. Nevertheless, they obeyed, hesitantly, but finally running off to the sides.

MONSTER, to the amazement of the crowd, did not dash away. He had recognized that voice under the mask; he knew his master had come to rescue him from his tormentors; he knew his pain would be respected. To him the presence of Onions meant peace. And he was tired; he needed calm and friendship. He neighed—happily.

Onions, facing the motionless bronco, whispered to him:

"All right, my friend, don't be afraid. I am here. I never hurt you, Monster. I ride you. No bit—bridles hurt, hey? All right. No bridle."

Lightly he leaped into the saddle. He held his hands high above his head, disdaining to steady himself by gripping the pommel. And, wonder of wonders, the horse did not dash away! It did not rear; it did not buck! A master was in the saddle, and the bronco surrendered!

In obedience to Onions's command, Monster trotted around the field, before the eyes of the gaping spectators. There was silence for a full minute. Then some one applauded, some one yelled, and the tumult began.

A new hero had been discovered. Smartly he was riding about the field, apparently controlling the horse by the simple pressure of his knees. When he passed the stand of the puzzled judges, Onions shouted:

"Tell me when I ride five minutes!"

Aghast, Jock Crawford looked on from his corner.

"Who is the man, anyway?" he demanded. But no one replied. No one listened to him.

And Onions, half Mexican, half Chinese, received the cheers of the white crowd. He drove about easily, and when the judges, after five minutes, pronounced him champion bronco buster of the county, he made Monster stop.

"Before we award the prize," cried the deep-voiced man in the stand, "do you want to unmask?"

Onions nodded. He glanced around. At his side, Jock Crawford was eying him curiously. In sheer glee Onions laughed. Everything had worked according to plan! . . .

"I unmask!" he shouted—and tore off the bandanna.

There was silence. Jock Crawford stepped back as though he were gazing at a horrible apparition. His face paled.

"The yellow pup!" he gasped.

"Me—yes!"

Onions grinned maliciously. His slanting eyes narrowed to slits, and he hissed:

"Me, Mr. Crawford, me that you hit and curse! Me—yellow and no good! Me—*I am a better rider than you!* See, I am champion!"

Then he glared over the crowd and cried:

"See, everybody. I am half Chinese, half Mexican! You recognize me? Onions—that's me! Mr. Crawford, he curse me, call me yellow pup all the time. But see, he can't ride like the yellow pup! I don't want prizes! I don't want anything—only to show you I am better than Mr. Crawford, see?" He laughed almost hysterically. Then he added: "If Mr. Sumner is here, let him listen: Under my pillow he find money—my savings—enough to pay for this horse. I quit my job right now! Monster and me—we go away to look for new job—maybe with a circus, if Monster will learn to buck for me. But we go away, anyway. Good-by, Mr. Sumner! You take my prize, yes? Sure! . . . And remember, everybody, the yellow pup, he is better than the big Mr. Crawford!"

Onions's knees pressed against the horse's belly. A strange thing happened, a weird thing. The bronco leaped high over the field fence, out into the open, and away, dashing among the frightened spectators. And on its back, waving his arms in farewell, Onions shouted:

"I am better, Mr. Crawford, I am better than you!"

It was his revenge. . . .

Those at the rodeo saw him ride off into the crimson flush of a setting sun—far, far down the road. It was the last they saw of the San Marese champion, and he left behind him a hush. With him he took his friend, the horse, and—satisfaction; and better companions no man of the plains can have.

Society Intrigue in London and Paris

One-Way Street

It's a Harder Job to Climb Out of Disgrace, However Unwarranted, Than to Fall in, as Austin Proves for Himself

By Beale Davis

Illustration by W. G. Ratterman

Begin this serial with any instalment. The story up to this point is here.

ROBERT AUSTIN'S hope that daylight would bring with it a solution of the previous night's happenings was vain. Reviewed the hundredth time the whole affair remained as inexplicable, and even more serious.

As he sat gazing out of the train which was carrying him up to London, he had no eyes for the beauty of the country through which he passed. And nowhere is there anything lovelier than the English countryside in June.

It was characteristic of Bob that he did not suspect Lady Sylvia. He had told her that he no longer loved her, and when, after a tempestuous scene, she had offered friendship if love was impossible, he had taken her in good faith.

So much of his ingenuousness was left him, even after three years under Lady Sylvia's tutelage. It was this naïveté, as well as his youth and enthusiasm, which had first attracted her to Bob and which made him easy prey for her. If he had had the usual number of undergraduate amours, he might have built up some sort of defense, but athletics had engrossed him more than campus sirens and his passion for Lady Sylvia had all the stored ardor which is usually partly dissipated before the age of twenty-two.

Lady Sylvia Hutton had been the reigning beauty of London for more years than she cared to remember and friends in the more conservative groups of London society, whom Bob had made in his early days at the Embassy, were distressed when he fell into her toils. It was not only the disparity in their ages—and that she was Sir Edward's wife—but the decadence of her adherents that made them unhappy.

Bob had balked at first at bridge for ruinous stakes, at the games of subterfuge and hoodwinking which were generally practiced in Lady Sylvia's set; but gradually, his conscience drugged by his infatuation, he had come to accept them.

His transference to the Embassy at Madrid came as a shock to both of them. At first resentful, he regained some of his early enthusiasm for his work, and after six months he had almost ceased to have any regrets. Another six months and he would have been cured.

Then he received a summons from Sylvia. Much to the regret of the Ambassador, who knew the situation, he asked for leave. When he joined her he expected to be told that she was ready to divorce her husband and marry him, but it was merely a yachting party en route to Monte Carlo which he found at San Sebastian.

A few weeks at Monte Carlo and he was back in the old stride, drinking hard, gaming high. The diplomatic service was forgotten until the arrival of a telegram announcing his transference to Paraguay. Two years of isolation! After a consultation with Sylvia, he resigned.

Two of his friends heard of this with deep regret—Elizabeth Stuart and Kathleen Lawrence.

Bob's knowledge of Mrs. Lawrence did not square with what the world said of her. She was a demi-mondaine with an international reputation. Bob knew her only as a beautiful woman and a good friend, with a nature as simple and sweet as a child's.

Sylvia went suddenly back to London, insisting, for some reason of her own, that Bob remain behind for a time.

And then he realized how purely physical her hold over him was, and as suddenly as his passion for her had sprung into life, it died.

He went to Kathleen with his problem, and she advised him to make himself so impossible and exacting that Sylvia would dismiss him, but never, never to tell her that he had tired of her.

Bob tried, but failed. His first kiss told Sylvia, but she struggled to keep him. He could not play up, however, and told her that it was finished.

What Bob did not know was that Sylvia's love had turned to hate at that moment, and ever since she had been carefully plotting to bring about his ruin. The Ascot party had been meticulously planned with that in view.

She had given him several false tips on the races and when he lost heavily had spread the word that he was in financial difficulty. She had him play poker with a party of eight instead of bridge, which he preferred, and then when the pot was unusually high and he had drawn an ace to two eights and two aces, she had upset the cards from which she had been dealing and revealed a duplicate ace of spades—the other in Bob's hand, which would have taken the pot.

There was not a chance of proving his innocence and in every face except Mrs. Brinton's Bob had read condemnation.

THE smoky gloom of Paddington station marked the end of the journey, through all of which Bobby had seen nothing except a green felt-covered table on which lay two aces of spades—and around it a circle of accusing faces.

"Please go around to the chemist's and get me some veronal," Bobby said to his servant, when they arrived in St. James' Street. "I didn't get much sleep last night, and I'm going to try now."

He was in bed when the valet arrived with the drug. "I'll take it now, and have some whisky with it, please."

Thanks to the drink and the drug, he finally drifted into half-consciousness, and then into a deep, dream-haunted slumber.

It was almost eight o'clock when he awakened, and he dressed hastily and went to the club for dinner. The surprise of one of the other members whom he met at the door brought him up suddenly. There was no room to doubt what he was thinking. Evidently he had been at Ascot, heard the story, and believed it. His first impulse was to turn and go away. Then he changed his mind. He had done nothing to be ashamed of! If he began skulking about, it would appear to be an admission that there was some truth in the slander. He went upstairs and into the dining-room, where he sought an unoccupied table, and was at once uncomfortably conscious of the undercurrent of amazement at his arrival.

The quickness with which this story had spread not only showed the zeal of the scandal vultures from Trent but also proved that Bobby Austin was—or had been—something of a personage in London.

Colonel Keyes, one of the older members of the club whom he had known ever since his arrival in London, came up and spoke to him. They went into the committee room, and, at the colonel's request, Bob gave his account of the affair at Trent.

"Um—uh!" his companion mumbled reflectively, as Bob finished. "Looks bad, doesn't it? . . . It's a pretty blunt thing to say, but as long as this thing is unexplained, I don't think you ought to come to the club. Mind you," he added quickly, "from the minute I heard it, I didn't believe it. I've known you too long. But until it's explained, you're in a hellishly awkward position. A money scandal, especially a gambling one—is the only one that seems to make any difference these days. Your morals may stink and nobody cares, but money—and they're on you like a pack of hounds!"

Bobby felt very grateful for this conversation, knowing the sincerity of Colonel

Keyes's belief in his innocence. "I suppose I should write my resignation and get out until I can prove that I'm not the crook that I'm supposed to be. I've done nothing to run away from and all my inclination is to stay here and face it out. Of course I *can* go back into diplomatic service; very possibly I can get an assignment somewhere in the East."

"Then take it! Do your best to straighten this thing out, but if you find that you can't—go! It isn't as if you had really done the thing. And people forget very quickly. It will be much easier for you, and also you won't be forced to put your friends to the test. After all, it's a pretty bad situation for them, too."

THE next morning he was at the Embassy waiting when Scott arrived. Was it his imagination, or was there something just a bit formal in Scott's greeting?

"Morning, Scottie! Came around to have a talk with you and also to find out whether you'd heard anything from Washington."

Scott's official air was really a cloak for his embarrassment, but Bob read into it condemnation. The Department's reply, Scott reported, had been sent down to the Ambassador.

"The Department has practically said that it will act as he recommends. He must have your explanation of all of this scandal on record before he can give his recommendation—for his own protection, if nothing else."

"Protection, be damned! And as for an explanation—I haven't any. Everything they say is true, except that I had anything to do with it. Who did, I don't know. That's what I have to find out."

"Until you do, you can hardly expect to be reappointed."

"Naturally not," Bobby agreed with heavy sarcasm. "I shouldn't expect my word to carry any weight. What's one lie more or less, among diplomats? As for the appointment—it can go to hell! I wouldn't have it now as a present. Put that in your bloody official communication, too, if you want to."

As he walked away from the Embassy, his anger mounted. That he had handled the situation stupidly increased his ill humor.

Disprove the story? How could he? He had no idea even how to begin.

He lunched alone, and when he walked into the dining-room was embarrassingly self-conscious. This too was a new sensation and a very disagreeable one. Afterward, he went to his rooms. There, he tried to read, but he found his attention wandering from the problems of the story's hero to his own, which seemed so much more unanswerable.

Sunday was ghastly. It had been so long since he had spent a week-end in town that he had forgotten how deserted it could be. Piccadilly and Bond Street were like country lanes. The echoing footfalls of occasional pedestrians emphasized their emptiness. All day he was quite alone. He could not even go to the club, where there would surely be some one with whom he could share this Sunday loneliness. When night came there was not even the theater to distract him.

Then he did something he had never done before. Quite alone he sat with a bottle of Scotch and a siphon at his elbow, and deliberately drank himself into insensibility. Somehow he got to bed and slept late into the next day.

Searle brought his letters with his coffee. There were five of them. Four were from his bookmakers. Bobby totaled up the amounts. He owed even more than he had thought. In his preoccupation with the graver affair, he had forgotten the financial disaster of Ascot.

Of all Bobby's friends, the Stuarts were the only ones who made any effort to show their faith in him. Elizabeth, after a talk with her father, wrote a friendly little note, inviting him down to Cobworth for the week-end. She sent it round to his rooms, but the servant brought it back, unopened. Mr. Austin had moved, he reported, and no one knew where he could be found.

At the moment when the servant from the Stuart house was inquiring for him in St. James' Street, Bobby was just around the corner in a lodging-house, asleep in a miserable furnished room. This was his first economy. Panicky at the smallness of his bank account and his failure to obtain anything to do, he had accepted a very good offer for his flat and had leased it for a year. Searle too had gone.

Colonel Keyes had been right. Bobby was beaten. As one empty day followed another, more and more he shunned every one he knew. The cut direct which more than once he had received not only hurt for itself, but made him imagine condescending pity in the actions of those friends who attempted to show their belief in him.

For lack of anything better to do, and because it was three days since his last inquiry, he walked around the corner to his old apartment and asked for his mail. There was only a day-old telegram, which he dreaded to open. It would surely be something else disagreeable! Finally, however, he took it out and read:

I will be in Paris on Saturday. Join me there if you can. KATHLEEN.

Paris! Kathleen! Why had he never thought of it before? Of course he would go. Unable to decide on anything for himself, he found here a decision ready-made for him. Today was Thursday. He would go the next day. Away from London! And he would stay away—Paris was cheaper, anyhow. Surely he would find something to do there. There must be some place for a man who spoke English, French, and Spanish. And Kathleen would be there. She was the one person who would understand.

"NOW tell me all about it. Who was at the table when it happened? I want to hear all that you can recall, from the beginning," Kathleen demanded.

They were in her sitting-room at the Ritz. The waiter had just removed the table on which they had dined and two hours remained before it would be time to go to an after-theater party.

Bobby turned from the window where he had been standing, blowing smoke rings into the warm summer air outside. It was very quiet in the room. None of the noise of traffic in the Place Vendôme reached it. Indistinguishable snatches of conversation and laughter floated up from the hotel garden below, where late diners still lingered at their tables, set under the trees.

"Don't let's talk about it. Talking does no good and I want to forget all about it. I've thought of nothing else since it happened—and now I'm exactly where I started. It isn't as if there were some person who was trying to do me in. It's facts, as they appear. The facts themselves, with no comment by any one, damn me. And I can't explain them."

"I know nothing at all about it except that you are supposed to have cheated in a game during Sylvia Hutton's Ascot party. I heard none of the details."

"Very well, then, I'll tell you all about it, as nearly as I can remember. Playing the fool as usual, I'd inhaled a lot of Scotch that evening and to save my life can't remember it any too clearly—that is, until it all happened. After that, it's all clear enough—every detail."

Then he told the story.

"Whom do you suspect?"

"Nobody. I've decided that the ace somehow got mixed in the pack by accident, and it was just my bad luck for it to turn up in my hand at the time it did."

"Don't be a fool. You know as well as I do that it couldn't have been there for the two or three hours that you had been playing and nobody notice it. Some one at the table put it in. That you may be sure of. Who was playing?"

Bobby named them.

"Every one of them a notorious scandal monger and trouble maker!" Kathleen commented. "Except Mrs. Brinton. She is the only one of the lot that I think it is safe to assume had nothing to do with it. How did she happen to be there, anyway?"

"I don't believe she was really expected to be at Trent at all—and I'm sure not to play poker. We were seven without her, but there were already three tables of bridge and so we had to be eight at poker, which is always one too many."

For a while Kathleen sat silent, rearranging the facts as she had heard them. "Bobby," she questioned abruptly, "did you ever give Lady Sylvia any reason to suspect that you were any less keen about her than you had always been?"

"Yes—I told her that it was all finished."

"What!" Kathleen exclaimed. "You told her! You promised me you wouldn't! Bobby, Bobby, and you have never suspected! You poor innocent! There's the answer, so plain it hits you in the face."

"No, no, you're wrong. Sylvia and I had everything out the very first day I came back to London. And it was all right—

she understood and agreed that I'd done the right thing. Why, she gave me a dinner party the very next night—and from then on we were together all of the time until this happened."

KATHLEEN looked at him and shook her head helplessly. "Your sophistication is only skin-deep, Bobby. Underneath you are as guileless as a baby. And Lady Sylvia was very angry, was she? Did my name come into the conversation at all? You didn't mention me, did you?"

"Not that I can remember—but your name did get into it somehow or other," he admitted, and recounted what had happened. His attempt to omit the details of Sylvia's tirade against her was so obvious that Kathleen found no difficulty in supplying them.

"It's very evident that I'm the first woman you confided this to. The stupidest one in the world would understand the whole thing the minute she knew that all this had happened. Sylvia picked the one way that she could ruin you without a chance of being discovered. I'm as positive as if I had seen her do it, that she put the card into the discards when she saw what was in your hand—but nobody can prove it. She's as clever as the devil—that woman. No doubt she had been prepared, waiting for her opportunity, every night that you played. It's a very old trick and a very safe one. The extra ace of spades was the one in the discard—not the one in your hand. It's as plain as a pipe stem. Don't you see the whole thing? And she didn't miss one detail to make it convincing."

"But Sylvia couldn't! Nobody could deliberately do such a hellish trick."

"Somebody did—and that somebody was Sylvia Hutton. I can quite see how it is so hard for you to accept this. But I told you that she would hate you and she has proved it. I can think of no other scandal that would ruin you as completely as this one has. And look at her position in the eyes of the world now, and what it would have been if she had let you go the day you told her you were through. You were too busy worrying about when you were to see her next to realize how very much you and I were together at Monte Carlo—but the rest of Monte Carlo saw. If you had gone back to London and you and she were not seen about together, every woman there would have said that I had taken you away from her—delighted that it had happened. They would have laughed—and once they did that, the day of Lady Sylvia, reigning beauty, would be ended.

"As it is, you played the devoted for all the world to see until you disgraced yourself and she threw you aside. There—you have it."

Bobby sat for a minute without speaking, his chin in his cupped palms. "I cannot—I simply cannot imagine anybody being so diabolical. When I think of all our—God in heaven—I can't believe it! And yet, I've got to. It explains everything—the game and a lot of other things that happened before which have puzzled me." Again he fell silent. Finally he looked up, with a wry smile.

"I take off my hat to her. She has made a hell of a good job of what she set out to do. Now that I know what happened, I'm no better off than I was before. With nothing to prove my words, no one would believe the truth, even if I told the story. Thanks to her, I'm Bobby Austin, card cheat. But if the day ever comes—" He left the sentence unfinished, nodding his head slowly. His mouth was a straight line and his eyes as hard as agate.

"Whew! Let's talk of something else. I feel as if I had been in a sewer," he exclaimed, trying to dismiss the whole disagreeable subject. "Tell me something of yourself."

"There's very little to tell. From my letters you know pretty well where I've been, and nothing very exciting happened, anywhere, as far as I can remember. However, I managed to wear all of my clothes to rags, so now I'm here to get a fresh supply."

"How long do you expect to be here?"

"What a silly question! A woman, Paris and clothes, what could be more indefinite? And you—how long do you expect to stay?"

"I'm just as indefinite as you are. I may stay here permanently. England, for the moment, I don't think I can stand. I've no ties in America. Paris seems, for a good many reasons, as good a place as any."

"You're not just going to play around and do nothing, are you?"

"Lord, no! I've got to get some sort of job—I've no money, as you know. I did my best to land something in England, but after all that card scandal, there wasn't a chance. Here I hope to get something right away. You see, I speak French and Spanish pretty well—Italian, too, for that matter. With that and all the connections I made while I was in the Service, it ought to be easy. The London scandal won't be known here," he continued confidently, "and I think everything will be all right."

From bitter experience, Kathleen knew that London and Paris are not so far apart as Bobby imagined, but she said nothing to shake his confidence. It was just possible that the story had not reached Paris. However, she did offer one piece of advice.

"If I were in your place, I'd wait a day or two before I went to see any one on business. In the meantime it wouldn't hurt you to find out what water tastes like."

"Why?"

"Look at yourself in the glass and read the answer. If there's a whisky and soda left in England, nobody would guess it by looking at you."

"Is it as bad as all that? I did drink like the devil. But with all of this mess happening, and then with nobody to talk to and nothing to do to take my mind off it, I just did, that's all."

"I understand—and don't think I'm blaming you at all. I'm not. I'm surprised that you did nothing worse; but right now is a pretty good time to stop. Don't you think so?"

"Yes, and I'm going to. Here with some one to talk to and something to do, it will be different. Those awful days there in that unspeakable room! It's like a nightmare, and I've just waked up."

"Days like that are terrible," Kathleen answered absently. She was looking back into the past at some days of her own.

"Why did you telegraph me to come to Paris?" Bobby inquired. His question, fitting so exactly as it did into her thoughts, brought her back to the moment with a start.

"I don't know exactly. Lots of reasons. I wanted some one to play around with, for one thing. You were rather on my mind, for another. It was only very recently that I heard of the affair at Ascot, and I was afraid you were having a bad time of it in London. I know what it is, you see, to be in the world's bad books, and I imagined you might like to get away for a while. So I suggested Paris and society's outlaws. And here you are. I hesitated a little about going to this party tonight. You know Paris well enough to know what sort of party one of Fleurelle's will be. One thing decided me. Whatever else the party will be, it will certainly be gay, and I think you need that."

"I certainly do. It will put me in a better frame of mind to set out in the morning on my hunt for a job."

Kathleen had made no mistake. They were indeed the outlaws of society. And so was he, he told himself bluntly. As definitely as any one present, he too was outside the pale. Then he began to wonder. Very possibly some of these were victims of circumstance like himself. Here, all that was demanded of him was that he forget the past of others. They, in return, would help him forget his.

IN THE course of the evening a party was arranged for the Sunday races at Longchamps.

Bobby had determined before starting that he could not afford to bet, even in small amounts, and held to his decision through exactly one race. When the odds were posted he found that his hundred francs had won him a very respectable sum and he put all his winnings on the next race, and again won. Fortune, who had treated him so shabbily of late, seemed to have relented. This became more evident as the day progressed, and he cashed his tickets after the last race, a big winner.

"Tomorrow I am going to make a beginning at finding a job. There are a couple of men I want to see at once," Bobby said as, very late, he and Kathleen were driving back to her hotel; "or the first thing I know, I'll not be doing it at all."

When they next met, Kathleen knew at once that something had happened, but she waited until the luncheon was well begun before asking any questions. "Well, what is it?" she inquired at length.

"Nothing at all, except that I went to see two men this morning about a job—got up early to do it. And that's all I got. From my reception, you'd think I'd spent my life robbing widows and orphans. I'm through. The next time I'm insulted, it won't be because I'm trying to avoid gambling for a living. From now on that's to be my profession. Robert C. Austin, gambler and card sharp, at your service."

"I'm sorry about this, Bobby. I was afraid of it."

"I'm not. I don't care a bit now."

"It's because I know you do, that I am," Kathleen answered.

And Bobby did care—so much that he wouldn't let even Kathleen suspect. Without saying anything to her he exhausted the Paris possibilities, one by one. After a week of it, meeting the London story everywhere he went, he gave it up.

At the end of lunch, one day, he told Kathleen what he had been doing. "I told you once before that I was through with these damn' smug respectable people who haven't been caught out yet," he announced cynically. "This time I mean it. Let's forget all about it and go racing this afternoon. There's a horse running in the last race that I've seen run in England, and I want to have a bet on him. He ought to win easily."

TWO months later Bob was comfortably established with his old valet in attendance. Definitely and finally he had severed all connection with the past in England, and had become part and parcel of this decadent outlaw world of Paris.

Outwardly he gave no indication that he had any regrets. What he was thinking during all the hours when he sat alone in his apartment staring hard at nothing was another matter.

He knew that autumn usually brought all London to Paris and he braced himself against it. One day, glancing about the room when he was lunching alone at Henri's, he found himself looking straight into the eyes of Elizabeth Stuart. She gave him no time to wonder whether he should speak or not. Smiling, she beckoned him to come to the table at which she was sitting with Lord Helmsford, who despite her lack of encouragement, seemed to be always in attendance.

There was nothing to do but obey, much as he would have preferred not to. The frank friendliness of Elizabeth's smile of recognition quickened the one thing which he was trying to kill—and which he knew he must if his present existence were ever to be more than tolerable—nostalgia. Days and weeks would pass and just when he told himself that it was really gone, this desire to return to his own would flood over him with unabated violence.

"How are you, Bob?" Elizabeth said, holding out her hand and smiling up at him from her seat at the table. Her tone was exactly right, neither over-cordial nor formal. For anything that it conveyed, they might have seen each other last the previous day. Helmsford's manner echoed hers.

"I saw you in the crowd as I was leaving the races yesterday, but got no chance to speak to you," she added, and for a few minutes they talked of the horses, her bets and the other things which so naturally open a conversation between two racing enthusiasts. "And now I'm going to let you go back to your lunch before it's all spoiled. I just wanted to let you know I was in Paris and tell you where we're stopping. Dad and I are over for a little while, possibly a week or two, and are at the Crillon. Come to see me. I'll be in at tea time this afternoon—if you're doing nothing else, drop in."

"Thanks, I will." Bobby took his leave and returned to his table.

As he walked back to his apartment after luncheon, his meeting with Elizabeth was uppermost in his mind. She represented one phase of his life as definitely as Sylvia did another. With the aloofness of a third person, which his present position made him feel, he reviewed the last four years, idly speculating which of the two men he saw there was the real one—Robert Austin, ambitious and young enough to take life very seriously or Bobby Austin, who didn't care whether school kept or not. That the question was purely an academic one, he conceded. Whichever was the real one had now become Bobby Austin, cheat.

All afternoon the recollection of Elizabeth's matter-of-fact friendliness lasted and he arrived before the Crillon so early that he was obliged to walk around the Place de la Concorde until a respectable time to go in and have tea.

He found Sir Ralph with her and during tea the conversation was three-cornered and impersonal. Afterward, her father left them together.

Bobby wished to talk about the subject which was in both their minds but avoided it with unexpected diffidence. Finally, in the midst of a remark of Elizabeth's, not even remotely related to it, he plunged headlong.

"What did you think of me when you first heard the story?"

"Just what I always have," she answered with no pretense of ignorance. "I never heard anything about it for weeks after it occurred."

"How did that happen?" Bobby demanded, amazed.

Elizabeth shook her head. "As soon as I did, I wrote to you and asked you to come to Cobworth for the week-end. But you had left your apartment and I was unable to get your address. I was certain you were having a horrid time."

As nothing else had, this very simple statement which evidenced such an unquestioning belief in him, awoke Bobby to the realization that there were others, besides himself, to whom he owed it to show that he was not the rotter that everybody—and himself at present—seemed bent on proving him to be. After all, he did have some friends. He walked over to the window and stood there for some time looking down at the scurrying vehicles in the Place de la Concorde before he spoke.

"I wish I had known that at the time," he said when he turned and faced Elizabeth. "It would have—oh, well."

"If you don't mind talking about it, I wish you would tell me just what did happen. I know almost nothing of it all."

He sat down beside her, and recounted the story, beginning with the game itself. For some reason, which he did not pause to analyze, he omitted even a suggestion of what had gone before. Not once did he bring Sylvia's name into the recital.

Impulsively sympathetic, Elizabeth laid her hand on his for a moment. "You *have* had a rotten time of it," she said. "And here in Paris—have things gone any better?"

"Yes and no. From the standpoint of getting a job, it was London all over again. In spite of the fact that I speak three or four languages and all that sort of thing, nobody would have me. I had to do something—and when it came to a choice of being a doorman somewhere—or possibly an interpreter at Cook's—and making a very few immaculately honest francs a week, or playing bridge and going racing, I chose the latter. Of course, if I had happened to be one of those sterling, strong men you read about, I wouldn't have. But I'm not."

"And if I were really a nice person, I'd try to exert an elevating influence and show you the error of your way, wouldn't I? Instead, what you've done seems to me the natural and logical thing to do. In your place, I'm sure I'd have done the same thing. But how did you happen to hit on Paris? Why did you come here?"

"If it hadn't been for Kathleen Lawrence, I imagine I'd still be in London without even the suspicion, which I now have but can't possibly prove, of the answer to the puzzle. She telegraphed me to join her over here."

The expression which came into Elizabeth's eyes every woman understands instinctively. But the man who does is wiser than he has any right to be. In it was the fear, the never admitted envy and implacable enmity with which women of all time have looked down from the walls of convention and virtue at the love brigands in the free country below. Neither side asks for quarter and neither side expects it. For this, those on the walls are to blame. Not one in a thousand of them suspects the real hardness of the free country, so deceptively alluring in the distance, and so they possess none of the understanding tolerance which it breeds in those who know it as it is. But Elizabeth Stuart was one of the exceptions, and as Bobby continued to talk, the hostility died out of her eyes.

"THERE are few women in the world like Kathleen," he added. "When I asked why she had telegraphed for me, she said that she knew what being in the world's bad books meant, told me that she was going to take me straight away to an amusing outlaw party and in the same breath gave me the devil for drinking so much. I didn't realize how far I had gone myself until she made me see it and cut it out. And I believe she dislikes my being in this mob here in Paris more than I do myself. I do hope she marries the Italian and gets out of it all—and somehow I believe that eventually she will." Although he did not realize it, his last remark was as fortunate as it was irrelevant. "She's much too good for the sort of life she has to lead."

That evening Bobby was in great good

humor, and when he analyzed it he discovered that anticipation of the next afternoon's engagement had produced it. Why was this? He could always have had a place in the life of the set in which Elizabeth moved. He had had a distinct one, which after he met Lady Sylvia he had thrown away without even a second thought. Lady Sylvia! The life of her and her satellites, stripped of all the glamour with which its newness had invested it for him, was much the same as that of the people among whom he now lived in Paris. Except that exigent lovers replaced complacent husbands, there was little to choose between them. Surfeited with the license of both, he felt in retrospect an attraction in his life before his initiation which he had failed to appreciate in its reality.

Prompt to the minute, he was waiting for Elizabeth when she came into the Ritz the next afternoon, and smiled at himself for a sort of pride at the approving glances which the people seated along the hallway cast after the very smartly gowned little person who walked to meet him.

"Do let's have tea quickly. I'm dying for some. I've been trying on clothes ever since lunch," she said, as they went to their table. They were scarcely seated when she saw Bobby staring past her, his face crimson. "What is it?" she demanded without looking around.

If possible Bobby's face became even redder. "I've done something terrible," he explained quickly, his embarrassment plainly evident. "I asked Kathleen Lawrence to have tea with me this afternoon and until this very minute forgot all about it. She has just come in, and is looking around for me now. She hasn't seen me yet."

It took Elizabeth only a second to decide. "Well, get up, you great awkward clown, and bring her over to our table. Don't let her stand there all afternoon looking for you."

He made no move to rise. "But you two having tea here together," he objected.

"Get up and go on, silly. You talk as if she had smallpox. Bad morals aren't contagious. At least I hope not. If they are I've been exposed to contagion since my first London ball. I must be old enough now to be immune. Hurry up, before she sees you."

There was really nothing else to do, and a few minutes later the three were sitting at the table together. Both women accepted the situation. And something in their manner when he introduced them assured him that there would be no conversational thrust and parry. He might have known this. Elizabeth was the sort who would either flatly refuse to meet Kathleen or meet her with no reservations. Kathleen's first remark was almost the same as Elizabeth's. "Do tell the waiter to hurry. What an afternoon I've had with the dressmakers! I'm exhausted."

The conversation which followed this opening was the inevitable one between two women who meet in Paris—clothes. They completely ignored Bobby—all interest in this model at Poiret's and that model somewhere else.

"Yes, I saw that one. Lovely, isn't it? I'm going to have it in brown," Elizabeth was saying when a waiter came up and leaning over Bobby's chair told him that he was wanted on the telephone.

"I BOIL every time I think of that woman!" Kathleen exclaimed impulsively, as she watched his retreating back. "Killing is too good for women of her sort."

"Who?"

"Sylvia Hutton, of course. She's responsible for Bobby throwing himself away."

"Indirectly, yes. But this gambling business which brought it all to a climax!"

"You don't doubt for a minute that she's responsible for that too, do you?"

"But—" Elizabeth objected.

"Has Bobby told you all about it? From the beginning, I mean?" Kathleen questioned.

"If it began with the week at Ascot, yes."

"Men are such fools. It didn't begin there. That was the end. It began months ago at Monte Carlo. I might have known that he would omit the most important, in fact the only, proof of his innocence, out of a twisted sort of reserve that some men seem to have for everything connected with their affections. I would never have known it myself if it hadn't been for the fact that I knew half the story before I saw him," Kathleen explained.

"He told me yesterday that he knew who did it but had no proof of it."

Kathleen almost snorted her contempt. "When it comes to a question of proving anything, all men are idiots. Unfortunately, to prove that she did it, Bobby would have to tell a lot of things which he simply can't. Sylvia Hutton knows that very well, and counts on it. I'll tell you what I know and I'm sure that you'll agree with me. No woman would need half the proof that exists to be convinced."

Before Kathleen had an opportunity to go further with her confidences, she saw Bobby returning to them. "Here he comes back. I suppose we'd better talk of something else. But I do wish I could tell you."

"Come and see me tomorrow," Elizabeth found herself unexpectedly saying, surprised to realize how vitally anything connected with this business interested her. "Why not come to lunch? We can lunch up in my sitting-room and can talk without any interruption."

"I would be very glad to," Kathleen said as Bobby reseated himself at the table, and the women at once returned to the conversation of clothes.

ELIZABETH and Bobby reined in their horses, and, at an easy canter, rode along one of the innumerable bridle paths which wind through the Bois.

It was in the early morning. The clear sunshine which flooded the day brought out all the varying shades of the surrounding trees, aglow with autumn color, and momentarily transformed lazily falling leaves into fluttering moths of brilliant flame and gold. The girl on horseback was a part of the picture. The severe cut of her habit accentuated her strong young slimness. Her big eyes were full of the beauty of the morning and her warm red lips smiled her delight at the sharpness of the October air which whipped the pink into her cheeks. With silent appreciation she rode through the vivid, golden woods, unconscious that she herself was an embodiment of the color all about her.

"Do you think we could leave the horses and walk for a while among these trees?"

"Of course," Bobby answered, swinging to the ground.

Almost without words they wandered away from the path, the multi-colored carpet of leaves rustling soothingly beneath their disturbing steps. At a particularly lovely spot they both stopped instinctively, and Elizabeth dropped down to a seat on the ground. Bobby stood for a minute, looking down at her, then stretched himself full length at her side, supporting himself on one elbow.

"I hate to think how nearly at an end our morning rides are," he said. "It's only four days now before you go back to England. I'm going to miss you terribly—much more than you have any idea."

Elizabeth did not reply. There was no use in telling him that her own feelings gave her not only an idea but a very disconcerting certainty.

For one reason and another, Sir Ralph had been obliged to prolong his stay in Paris into weeks instead of days, and after their first chance meeting Bobby had managed to allow very few days of the time to pass without seeing her.

In much the same way that a ten-day ocean voyage can overbalance ten months of meeting ashore, these days in Paris, where neither had the distracting influences of customary duties or surroundings, had produced an understanding between them which in all their years of acquaintance they had not reached.

Now, every morning they rode, and most of their evenings they also spent together. Sometimes it would be Montmartre, where they ate a succession of abominable dinners during expeditions in search of new and amusing restaurants—which they never found; sometimes it would be across the river to have one of the famous ducks at the Tour d'Argent or to mingle with the students in one of their haunts on the Rive Gauche. To vary it, they would dine and dance at one of the big restaurants in their own quarter, where half of London sat at the other tables. Why he was accepted by the acquaintances he met he understood perfectly, he told himself, knowing the psychology of the visitor to Paris. Warned beforehand that the French capital is glittering, wicked, outrageously shocking, the stranger looks at the tawdry, advertised display of vice and abandon, exhibited for a price, and is bored instead of shocked at what there is to see. Bobby saw himself as an added exhibit in the show, to be accepted here as part of the night life, taboo everywhere else. This, and the fact that he was always seen with Elizabeth. The position of the Stuart family in England was such that any one would think twice before needlessly incurring the ill will of one of its members.

At the very first, he had told Elizabeth his views, and suggested that it would be wiser if she were not seen too much with him. She had laughed at him. "Why shouldn't I? Even if you are right as to what people think of you, and you are one of the dissipations of Paris—all English people dissipate here. Nothing counts in Paris. Our respectability is like charity, except that it ends at home as well."

Now, as he lay stretched out on the leaves watching her, he thought of these words. At the end of four days she would go back to England and out of his life. And no one could take her place. He knew this—yet the knowledge brought none of the wild, rebellious protest which he had felt when he had left Sylvia to go to Spain. But the desolate ache was all-enveloping, and struck infinitely deeper. He knew now that because this love for the girl sitting beside him had been slow to blossom, its flower, softer-colored than that of his first vivid infatuation, was no less perfect—and infinitely more fragrant. But he had learned too late. Now Elizabeth was unattainable. She was of another world—the world that had turned him out.

"WHAT are you going to do with yourself after I return to England? What are your plans?" Elizabeth asked at the end of a long silence.

"Go back to the outlaws, I suppose. They seem to be the only people who will have me."

"Do you think that is exactly fair? I don't."

Bobby looked at her quickly. But Elizabeth was very busy with her riding crop, tracing an intricate pattern on the toe of her boot, and he could not see what was in her eyes. Had he seen, the situation would have been much easier for both of them. As it was, he felt that he had no shadow of right to say the words which, unbidden, had come to his lips—and she, misreading, found another reason for his silence. He knew and—now that she had talked with Kathleen Lawrence—she knew that Sylvia Hutton was responsible for all that he had suffered. And yet he had remained silent. Not once had he mentioned her name. Did he still, despite everything, love Sylvia Hutton? The very intenseness of her wish not to believe this made it seem more certain.

Denied the right, as he thought, to say the thing that he wished, Bob Austin's substitution was not a happy one. "No, I don't. A more ungrateful speech I never heard—nor a more ungracious one. I'll never be able to let you know what your friendship has meant to me, and your proof of it here in Paris, coming just at the time that it did, makes it still more unforgettable."

Gratitude! The last thing that she wanted to hear expressed. Much better no response at all. Yet, what else had she expected? "What do you mean when you say 'coming just at the time that it did'?" she inquired perfunctorily, feeling no interest in his answer.

When he had used these words, he had not meant any one thing in particular. Then his good genius came close, smiled on him and prompted his words. "I meant that it made me forget an encounter with the one person in the world that I least wished to see. That person was Sylvia."

"Yes?" Her voice invited him to continue. Bobby's reasons for wishing to avoid Sylvia would answer the one question which Elizabeth found vitally important.

"Until I saw her, I still held a wavering doubt. I couldn't bring myself to believe appearances. When we met, I knew that I was not mistaken and that she was responsible for everything that had happened—and I hated her."

Bobby looked at the girl beside him, and in her eyes there was something which forced him to go on, dragged the words from his lips which in imagination he had said so often, and had as often told himself that his right to do so was forfeited. If the day had been less gorgeous with sun-drenched flame and gold—and if Elizabeth had not been exquisite with the loveliness which comes to every woman's face when, glorified by the benedictions of generations yet to come, she stands on the threshold of love, he might have remained silent.

Against all of this, Bob Austin's determination paled and vanished altogether, and the lure of beauty which first had beguiled him into the One-Way Street, now showed, him the one person who might lead around a turning at its end. The one thing that he knew, and knew absolutely, was that always he had been searching for something—and that now he had found it, and found it too late.

"No man whose name has been dragged in the gutter as mine has, has a right to tell a woman that he loves her. I know that. But I must. I love you, Elizabeth—with a love that I never dreamed was possible." He said the words very softly, and every tone was a caress. "With no name to offer that any woman would accept, I had determined to say good-by to you and let you go back to England without telling you. But I couldn't."

"If you had, I'd have gone hating myself for a sentimental little fool who had cheaply given her love where it was not wanted."

Incredulous happiness held him breathless for a moment. "Do you mean that in the face of all that has happened, in spite of everything, you've come to love me?"

"I didn't have to do that. I loved you already. I have from the very beginning."

Five minutes before, she would have died rather than say these words. Now she made her admission almost proudly, and Bob, marveling once more at the mystery of women, put out his arms and drew her close to him. Neither spoke, but her lips smiled as they met his in their first kiss. Yesterday and tomorrow were forgotten. They had found each other. The past and the future were obliterated in this wonder.

The sun had climbed almost to its zenith before it found an opening in the golden leaves above their heads, through which it could slip to warn them of the hours they had been sitting, lost in their new-found happiness.

Its coming had the effect that the arrival of an unwelcome third always has. It ended their all-absorbing conversation of you and me and us. It did even more. It brought them back to the very ugly world of actualities—and Bobby Austin, card cheat.

With the thought Bobby's spirits fell to a depth of depression which even in his first futile revolt he had come nowhere near experiencing. "Why did we come here this morning? Why didn't I stay away from you? I might have known that in spite of myself, sometime I'd tell you that I loved you—and I've no right to," he accused bitterly, "as long as I'm disgraced and can't ask you to marry me. If there seemed to be the slightest hope of ever clearing it up—but there doesn't."

"There must be some way, dear, and together we'll find it," Elizabeth asserted with as much confidence as she could muster.

Bobby, better than any one else, knew how very difficult this promised to be. He had tried, and failed miserably.

"I wish I even half thought so," he said.

"But we will," Elizabeth insisted, and in her voice was the steel of purpose which comes to every woman when she fights for the man she loves. "Now that we know that Sylvia did it, we have something to start with, anyway. Until you came here to Paris, you didn't know that much. You were searching in the dark."

"HOW do you happen to know it was Sylvia?" Bobby demanded. "I've been careful not to mention her name."

"Do you think I didn't notice that, silly? It's the first thing that a woman would. But it wasn't that which made me sure that it was she."

"Then what did?"

"Something Mrs. Lawrence told me."

"Mrs. Lawrence! When have you had an opportunity to talk to Kathleen?"

"The day after you introduced us. You went to the telephone, you'll remember, and we arranged to lunch together."

"And you never told me. Why didn't you?"

Elizabeth's smile was tender and amused and altogether irresistible as she glanced up at him quickly. "Do you think I had any intention of letting you guess how much interest I was taking in your affairs—then?"

"You darling!" Bobby whispered, and once more the gloomy future was forgotten in the very thrilling present.

But the future refused to remain forgotten.

"I must arrange to go back to England at once and begin trying again to put myself straight with the world. Don't you think so?"

"Of course, the sooner the better. It's the one thing that has got to be done."

Bobby drew a deep breath. "Yes, if it can be—and if it can't—"

"Don't let's consider that. Let's try and see what we can do first. We haven't even begun yet."

"You've forgotten all the days and weeks that I spent in London to no effect."

"No, I haven't, poor boy. But then you were working in the dark. Now you know who did it—it's just proof that we want. Tell me, have you talked it over with any man?"

"One—Colonel Keyes. But of course I told him nothing more than what happened at Trent, none of the rest of it."

"WHY don't you tell the whole story to Dad—everything? He thinks pretty straight. It's just possible that he may see it from an angle we've missed. I think you ought to, anyway—now. Don't you?" There was the faintest suspicion of shyness in her voice when she made her suggestion.

"Yes, I'll stop and talk to him when we get back to the hotel. Which reminds me of how very late it is getting. We ought to be going, don't you think so?"

They found Sir Ralph reading the English papers when they came in and in a few minutes Elizabeth went out of the room, leaving the two men together.

Half an hour later Bobby rose from his chair to take his leave.

"That's the way it appears to me," Sir Ralph said. "Don't forget that, in spite of appearances, you have a lot of friends in London who have never believed this story from the beginning. Don't stay here and take it lying down. Go back and keep at it. I hate to have to put what I am going to say so baldly, but it's too vital to me to risk any misunderstanding. I'm referring to you and Elizabeth. If you had come to me a year ago and told me that you wanted to marry her, neither I nor her mother would have raised any objection. Now I'll be perfectly frank and say that as long as things remain as they are, I'll never consent to it. And you understand that this is not because I have any doubts at all."

"I understand perfectly," Bobby answered. "I hope you know without my having to tell you that I, myself, would never let Elizabeth even risk having to go through any of the misery that this sort of thing brings with it."

"I was sure that you would feel this way about it, but am just as glad to hear you say so. Now go ahead and make your arrangements to come back to London. When you get there, we'll see what we can do together to bury this thing definitely and finally."

"Thanks," Bobby said, smiling into the eyes of the older man, as he held out his hand to say good-by. . . .

Mrs. Lawrence was dining with the Italian, who had arrived in Paris the day before. They had come in late, and the room was already full. As she nodded to various acquaintances, a couple at a distant table caught her eye.

"Isn't that Mrs. Brinton, across in the corner? You remember, she is the fair American woman who was with the English yachting party at Monte Carlo last winter."

"I remember. She was in the same party with the English beauty—what's her name?—Lady Sylvia Hutton, and that American chap that I was so jealous of, the one you used to sit and talk with for hours in the rooms."

"Absurd, you are, Beppo. But look and tell me if it is Mrs. Brinton. I can't see very well. Some one's head is in the way."

"Yes, it is—I'm sure. But why do you ask? Is she a great friend of yours?"

"No, not particularly, but I got to know her fairly well after you left Monte and she is quite nice. I liked her. I thought she was in America; that's why I am so curious about her now. Who is with her? Do you know him?"

"Never saw him before. Evidently he is American."

They started to dance and when the music stopped, they were almost directly in front of the table at which Mrs. Brinton was sitting. The two women had nodded and smiled their greetings across the floor.

"This is unexpected, seeing you," Kathleen said, as they shook hands.

"And very nice," Mrs. Brinton replied. "You don't know my husband, do you?" she added, and introduced the man who was standing at the table.

His puzzled expression, as he bowed gravely, amused Kathleen. It was evident that he had heard of her and expected henna hair and long jet earrings.

"When am I going to see you and hear all that has happened in Europe since I have been away?" Mrs. Brinton inquired.

"Soon, I hope. Call me up at the Ritz and we'll arrange something."

"That's splendid. We are there, too. Why can't we lunch together tomorrow? Tom is leaving me to go and attend to some business, and I'll be all alone. Have pity on me."

"Shall we lunch at about half-past one?" Kathleen asked, accepting.

Back at her own table, she said to her companion: "Now that I have seen her husband, I understand less than ever how she happened to be with the Lady Sylvia Hutton lot last year. She's not a bit their sort."

"Why, I thought that it was on account of Mrs. Hamilton's husband. Wasn't he supposed to be very keen about her?"

"If so it was all on his side. I *do* know that. No, I think it was plain ignorance. I don't understand it—but it certainly seems to be true. Neither the English nor Americans appear to be able to size up the other. Too much alike, I suppose, and at the same time as different as the two languages. At all events, she doesn't fit in with that crowd."

Next day, when Kathleen came downstairs for luncheon, she found Mrs. Brinton awaiting her.

"I think we must begin with a cocktail—to remind us of last winter at Monte Carlo. Nowhere have I ever drunk as many as I did on that one trip," Mrs. Brinton said, looking across the table at Kathleen. "And what a hectic time I've had since! Back to England, then to America, hospitals, operations and all of that."

"I heard that your son was ill. I hope that he is quite all right again?"

"Not entirely, but very much better, I'm glad to say. It is really on his account that we are here now. He has to be under a specialist in London and so we have taken a house there. Tom—my husband—won't be able to stay all of the time, but I insisted that he come over for a while anyway, so that people could see that he isn't a myth."

"So you have taken a house in London?"

"Yes. It's not large but quite nice. We have been over only a week, and I haven't had much of a chance yet. But I go back to London in a day or two, as soon as Tom has finished his business and the dressmakers do the same for my bank account."

The very agreeable topic of clothes lasted until the meal was nearly through.

"Now tell me what has happened over here since I've been in America? I've seen nobody yet and know nothing at all."

"Nothing very startling that I can think of."

"Where is Sylvia Hutton holding court now?"

"London, I think. She was in Paris for a few days but has gone back to England now."

"Then it goes without saying that Vera Hamilton is there—and Bobby Austin, of course."

Kathleen looked up in surprise. "On the contrary, he is right here in Paris, and has been for some time."

"How does that happen? Isn't he as devoted as ever to Sylvia?"

PLAINLY puzzled, Kathleen answered: "Surely you were at the Ascot party when the cheating business happened?"

Mrs. Brinton nodded.

"That's why he is here. The scandal drove him out of England."

"Oh, really! That does surprise me. At the time I was so sure that it was all some sort of mistake and thought it would be explained when every one's excitement calmed a bit. It happened late in the evening, you know—and several of the players had had too much Scotch and soda. Bobby Austin! Still I can hardly credit it."

"Of course you can't," Kathleen agreed quickly. "He didn't do it. The card wasn't in the pack by accident, either. It was put in there—intentionally—but it was one of the other players who did it."

"I don't understand you," Bettina Brinton objected, frowning. "Why should any one else do it? He was the one person who benefited."

"I don't see much benefit in being disgraced, do you? That's all he got out of it. That's the reason why the card was slipped in—and at once discovered. The tragedy for him, poor boy, is that there is no way to prove this."

"You don't mean that Adèle Audley was vile enough to do it out of spite for that bridge row they had on the yacht?"

Kathleen shook her head emphatically. "No. It was Sylvia Hutton. Nobody knew it, but Bobby had committed the one unpardonable sin. He had told her to her face that everything between them was finished. And you see the result."

In stunned astonishment, Bettina, her mouth wide open, sat staring at Kathleen. Then shrewd understanding took the place of astonishment. "Of all the fools! Of all the utter fools!" she said slowly. "I could kick myself. And during all these months I never guessed it—never even thought of it again until this minute. I did intend to write but never did. Forgot everything except my boy, and how ill he was. But how could I have been so stupid!"

"What under the sun are you talking about? Forgot to write what?" Kathleen inquired, her face twisted in a frown as she tried to follow Bettina's thoughts.

"About the pack of cards. It proves it absolutely."

"DO EXPLAIN what you are talking about," Kathleen demanded a little impatiently. "I haven't the foggiest idea."

"Well, as you possibly know, my husband's agent in London telephoned me late at night and told me of Jack's accident, and I sailed for America the next day. I got the message in the midst of all of the excitement, and straight away went to my room, so apprehensive that the row, and everything connected with it, went completely out of my head. I didn't sleep a wink all night, and the next morning my nerves were in tatters. I sent my maid to get me a pack of cards—thought I'd play solitaire going up in the train to try to keep from thinking. It happened that I never even took them out of their box until several days later aboard ship, when Lawford Gordon, a friend of mine from New York, proposed that we play cards, and I produced the pack which I had brought from Trent. He discovered that the ace of spades was missing."

"Yes, yes, go on," Kathleen urged, all interest.

"Naturally, I thought at once of the game my last night there, and of the extra ace which had appeared in that pack and sent for my maid and asked her whether she remembered where she had got the cards. She had met Sylvia's maid in the hall outside my door and told her that I had sent for a pack of cards. The maid gave her one which she had found in Sylvia's room when she was straightening it up the night before, after Sylvia had gone down to dinner."

"And you didn't see what that meant?" Kathleen demanded incredulously.

"No, I didn't. Now, I can't imagine why—except," she added defensively, "I knew nothing of any row between Sylvia and Bobby, and so the cards coming from Sylvia's room explained nothing to me. From her actions no one would ever guess that anything at all was wrong between them. Exactly the contrary, if anything. But I was much too worried about my boy to pay very much attention to anything else."

Kathleen said nothing, but sat biting her lip and staring meditatively at the pattern which she was absently tracing on the tablecloth with her cigarette holder. "I was thinking," she said at length, "of what will be the very best way of using this. Of course you're right. It clears Bobby—but unless it's generally known—unfortunately a scandal travels so much faster and further than its explanation."

"Then tie the explanation to the tale of another scandal. That, every one will hear. To say that Bobby Austin isn't guilty, after all, is much too dull a story for any one to trouble to repeat. But as a tag to a story about Sylvia! Can't you hear them?"

Kathleen laughed. "You're right. Put Sylvia Hutton's name into any scandal and there is hardly a woman in Europe who wouldn't drop everything else to rush out and spread the glad tidings."

Bettina's laughter mingled with Kathleen's. "Wonderful how women stand up for each other, isn't it?"

"Speaking of women," Kathleen continued, "there is one, I'd particularly like to tell right away."

"Who is she?"

"Elizabeth Stuart. And she is right here in Paris now. Let's see if we can get her to come around for tea."

Mrs. Brinton raised her brows inquiringly. "Is she so particularly interested?"

"It's pure guesswork on my part, but I think she is—very much. I've noticed a lot of little things that make it look so, and I hope I'm right. If there is anybody living who needs a level-headed somebody to keep him in order, it's that blunderbuss Bobby. When you see him, you won't know whether you would like to weep or to shake him for the way he takes all of this. He is exactly like a child who is being punished and doesn't know for what. He would hardly be convinced that Sylvia had done it. Finally he was, but only when he couldn't escape it. Now about Elizabeth Stuart—what do you think of asking her to tea and telling her?"

"Yes, by all means, if you want to. Go

and try to get her on the phone and I'll join you upstairs," Bettina agreed.

"Very well. Suppose you come to my rooms. I'm just down the hall from you."

At a few minutes before five, Elizabeth was announced and Kathleen asked that she be shown up to her sitting-room.

"How do you do?" Elizabeth said, shaking hands with Mrs. Brinton. "I thought you were still in America."

They talked generalities for a while, and it amused Kathleen to note Elizabeth's poorly disguised impatience. It was evident that she did not realize that Mrs. Brinton was to share in the conversation she had come especially to have, and was eagerly awaiting her departure. Finally Kathleen relented.

As she listened to the details of the story of the discovery aboard ship, which Mrs. Brinton retold, Elizabeth's breathless intentness was sufficient proof to the two women who watched her that Kathleen's conclusions were correct. There was a great deal more than friendly interest in her absorption.

"It fits in exactly with everything else," Elizabeth said to the other two women. "I was with him when he lost a very big bet at Ascot, following one of her tips. Of course she knew that it was a rotten one when she gave it to him. With him a big loser at the races, the rest would look so much more plausible. The calculation of it all makes it so much worse. There's nothing I wouldn't do to that woman," she concluded with venom so illuminating that her listeners could not repress their smiles.

"Would you be the one to use the facts?" Kathleen asked bluntly. "Somebody must, if they are to help Bobby at all. In his present position, poor fellow, he can't. Nobody would believe him."

"Yes, I will," Elizabeth answered unhesitatingly, and then flushed red under the eyes of the two women. "I see that you both guess why."

"There's nothing that I could be more pleased to hear!" Kathleen exclaimed with quick sincerity. "It's just what I hoped would happen. Bobby's good luck seems really to be returning.

"I have an idea that I see the way," she went on. "What do you think of this?" As she sketched her plan, she saw from the expression of her listeners that they thought well of her proposal. "Do you think you could do it?" she concluded, turning to Elizabeth.

"I'll try, anyway. But it *is* a nasty job. I hate rows and scenes—and this will certainly make both. But where? It couldn't, of course, occur in my own house."

"Naturally not," Mrs. Brinton agreed. "But why not in mine? It will give me an opportunity to return Sylvia's Ascot hospitality in kind," she added, looking at Kathleen and smiling meaningly. "And another thing: I think we should agree not to mention it to any one at all."

THAT night Bobby and Elizabeth dined together for the last time before her return to England, but his mood was very different from the one of his anticipations of a few days past. In a very few days he would be going to England himself.

"Doesn't seem so bad, your going, now that I am to be in London myself this week," he said, vocalizing his thoughts.

The remark gave Elizabeth the opportunity she wanted.

"It is going to be a little longer than that if you will agree to do something that I want very, very much."

Bobby looked across at her, surprised.

"And what is that?"

"I want you to stay here in Paris for a few weeks longer."

"But, Elizabeth! No longer ago than this morning you said that you thought I should arrange to come at once."

"I know that I did, but something has happened since then. Something which possibly—mind you, I said possibly—will mean an end to all this scandal. And if it does, it will be much better for you to be here in Paris at the time—completely out of anything that happens."

"But what is it?" Bobby's eyes were shining with excitement and eagerness.

Elizabeth hesitated. She did so want to tell. "No, it's best not to tell you," she decided. "And besides I've promised. One thing is sure. It will help matters, anyway—how much remains to be seen. It's just possible that Sylvia will see the wisdom of admitting that she did it."

"Never!" Bobby declared emphatically. "I know Sylvia. She'll never admit anything that damages her."

"But suppose she decides that it is the less of two evils?"

"Now I'm dying of curiosity. You must tell me."

Elizabeth shook her head.

"And you—will you be mixed up in it in any way?"

"Very much so."

Instantly his face grew serious. "Then I won't have it. I won't, for a minute, think of letting you."

"You won't have it! Listen to the man, I ask you. You won't have it!" Elizabeth laughed teasingly, but her laugh could not turn Bobby from his seriousness.

"No, I mean it. Rather than have you dragged into it, I'd rather that it should never be cleared up."

"Don't worry about me. My name won't be dragged anywhere. Of that I assure you."

For half an hour they argued. Finally Bobby gave in. After all, he reasoned to himself, Elizabeth's rights in anything pertaining to his name were now equal to his own.

The hopefulness with which she anticipated this mysterious "something" which was to happen proved contagious, and before the evening came to an end he found himself looking to the future with a keenness of anticipation he had not felt since that last night of the Trent house party.

THE two weeks which followed Elizabeth's return to England were very long ones for both Bobby and herself. His daily letters full of plans, all based on the hope that a future for them together was soon to be possible, increased her dread of the test which each day drew nearer.

Almost daily she saw Bettina Brinton, who seemed to share none of her misgivings. Her calm certainty of success greatly helped Elizabeth to avoid the panic which sometimes was so near.

When the day finally arrived, Elizabeth spent it doing the one thing she wished not to—thinking about it, and imagining all the things that could happen and just as many that could not. Consequently, when she stepped into her car to go to Belgrave Square, every nerve was on edge with excitement and uncertainty.

Most of the guests were assembled in Bettina Brinton's drawing-room when Miss Stuart was announced. As she crossed the polished floor to speak to her hostess, she glanced about at the people in the room, and noted with satisfaction that Mrs. Brinton had more than successfully carried out her part of the conspiracy. They were all there.

Surrounded by a circle of listeners, among them Colton, Charles Hamilton, and Dauvel of the French Embassy, Sylvia Hutton was recounting some story, which was being received with roars of laughter. As she looked at Lady Sylvia, tonight even more beautiful and sparkling than usual, the realization that, in one of the dresses she had brought back from Paris with her, she herself was the smartest woman in the room was reassuringly comfortable.

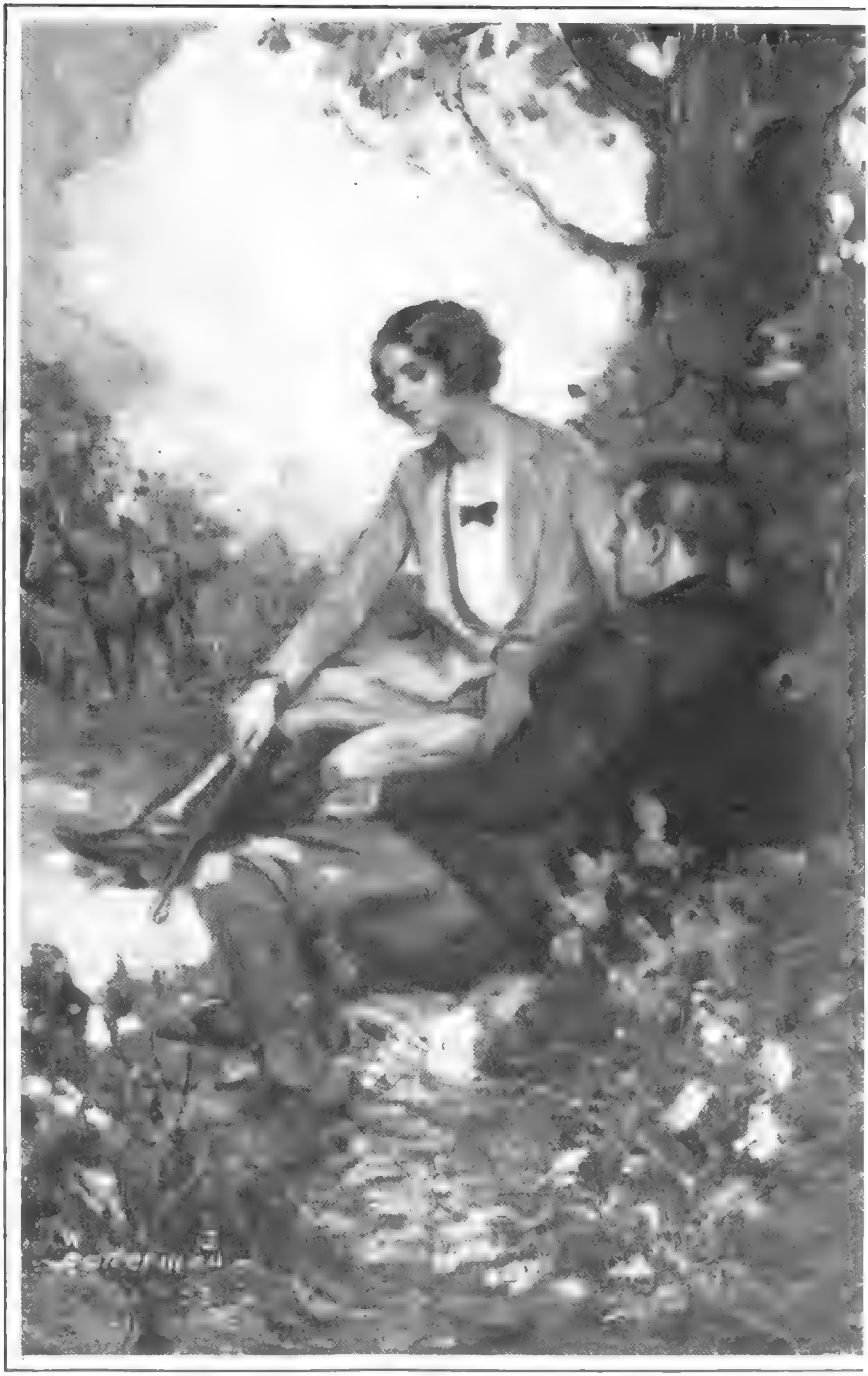
Lady Audley, Julia Archdale, Vera Hamilton and three or four men who had been in the party at Trent formed another group. Scattered about the room were another dozen guests—each invited for a reason.

In a few minutes, dinner was announced. Dauvel took her in, and at table she found that Colton was seated on her other side. This was highly satisfactory. From experience she knew that both were men much fonder of their plates than their partners, and she felt in no humor to struggle with small talk.

From beneath her long lashes she studied Sylvia, who was seated at the far end of the table and on the other side, and admitted to herself that the prospect of the evening ahead of her was terrifying. Sylvia Hutton was no mean antagonist—and one who had gained her position, and held it, by using any and every weapon which came to her hand. She recalled how one woman, who had stood in Sylvia's way, had awakened one morning to find all London in possession of a secret she had confided to Sylvia when the two had been inseparable friends. It was comforting to realize that she had nothing to fear along this line.

With very few interruptions—and those perfunctory—from the men beside her Elizabeth continued to plan her moves until, at Bettina's signal, she rose and followed the other women into the drawing-room.

While her hostess was busily assigning her guests to the different bridge tables, leaving herself, Elizabeth, Lady Audley and Sylvia the women for poker, Elizabeth stood beside the fireplace thinking, while she waited for the men to come from the dining-room.



Gratitude! The last thing that she wanted to hear expressed. Much better no response at all.

Deciding that it would be better to leave the room altogether, and thus be certain that every one was seated before she went to the poker table, she turned to Bettina.

"May I use the telephone?" she asked.

"Of course. Better use the one in my sitting-room. It's the most convenient."

Elizabeth waited for five minutes after she heard the men go into the drawing-room before returning. Every one was already seated when she entered.

"Over here, Elizabeth," Mrs. Brinton called. "You will have to play poker tonight."

Elizabeth walked across the room and stood behind her vacant chair.

"Do sit down, Elizabeth, and let us begin. I'm waiting," Lady Audley demanded, the cards poised for dealing. "You're delaying everything."

Elizabeth shook her head. "No, I've decided not to play; the game looks to be too dangerous."

"Ridiculous!" Lady Audley declared in surprise. "We are going to play for very small stakes. You couldn't lose a great deal if you tried. Why this sudden timidity? I've never noticed it, racing. You'll bet any amount on a race."

WITH difficulty Elizabeth forced herself to answer. Her reply would precipitate a situation, the outcome of which was of vital importance. She glanced quickly at Sylvia. If she had an intimation of what was to come, she concealed it perfectly.

"That's quite true. But you have never seen me risk one penny on a race which I did not feel sure would be honestly run."

The remark was made in an even tone, but the words were uttered slowly and loudly enough to be heard by every one in the room; and it was evident that they were. The players at the bridge tables put down their hands and looked across inquiringly.

For a second, no one at the table, beside which she stood, spoke. Every one was looking at Elizabeth. Still standing behind her chair, she suddenly felt her self-possession return. Quietly she awaited a demand for an explanation.

The demand came from Colton. "Do you realize that your remark carries a very nasty insinuation?" he questioned in the tone of a querulous old woman.

Elizabeth could feel the stares of the bridge players behind her. Her glance passed from one to another of the faces around the poker table. Colton, round and fat and bald, looked like nothing so much as an indignant and flurried old hen. Mrs. Brinton was all eyes and tense interest. Lady Audley was furious, as was the Frenchman. Lord Courtleigh and Edwardes, the other two men at the table, were puzzled but nothing more. Then her eyes met Sylvia's and, looking straight into them, she answered Colton's question.

"If I insinuated anything, I'm sorry. I didn't intend it that way. I was attempting to state a fact."

Before Colton could follow his splutter of amazement with words, she continued, never taking her eyes from Sylvia's:

"If you remember, there was a poker game at Trent during Ascot week at which an extra ace mysteriously appeared among the cards. Playing were"—as she enumerated, her eyes passed around the table and returned to Sylvia's—"one, two, three, four, five people who are playing now. Personally, I don't care about being at a table where it might happen again."

"You are being preposterously insulting, whether you intend to be or not," Lady Audley exploded furiously. "I demand an explanation and an apology. How dare you say such a thing when every one knows that Bobby Austin did it?"

"Bob Austin did not do it—which I can prove."

A tense silence, emphasized by Lady Audley's excited vehemence which had preceded it, followed the words which Elizabeth uttered with such calm assurance.

"Then who did?" Colton squeaked, scenting a new scandal.

"The ace of spades was put in the pack by the dealer—Lady Sylvia Hutton."

Almost before the words were spoken that lady's laughter filled the room. Elizabeth listened with grudging admiration. It was worthy of a Bernhardt or a Duse. Neither too loud nor too high, it was a perfect expression of amusement, tinged neither with malice nor with apprehension.

For a moment it shook her confidence. Would Sylvia's pose and effrontery successfully carry her through this situation, as they had numberless times in the past? Was the very vile cold-bloodedness of what she had done, itself to belie it and make it sound preposterously impossible?

"Elizabeth, my dear, how deliciously amusing!" she exclaimed, with forgiving condescension. "You, of all people, to be taken in by that attractive and plausible scamp! And so that is Bobby's explanation now, is it? What a misfortune he didn't think of it at the time!" Again she laughed.

The smiles which came to several faces brought a hot flush to Elizabeth's, but only strengthened her determination. No amount of laughing would prevent her continuing.

"YOUR remarks would be more convincing if you had not failed to destroy the pack of cards which you left in your room when you went down to dinner that night. That was very careless on your part." As she spoke she watched Sylvia narrowly and saw that she had scored. "How do you explain them?"

The faintest flicker of fear showed for a moment in Sylvia's eyes, then disappeared, but not before Elizabeth had seen it and pressed her advantage.

"The unexplained fact is this," she said, addressing her remarks to the others at the table. "On the night that the game under discussion was played, a pack of cards, identical with the one with which you played, was discovered in Sylvia's room after she had gone down to dinner. Identical, with one exception. The pack which was found upstairs lacked the ace of spades."

Her statement produced even more of a sensation than she had anticipated, and as she looked around she saw that most of her listeners—the women, anyway—had already accepted her words without asking for proof of their truth. But this was not what she wanted. Sylvia must admit their truth. But would she?

Sylvia's voice, venomous and strained, strengthened her belief that she would. "That's an insufferable lie—coined by a miserable cheat to clear himself, and told to a love-sick chit of a girl, infatuated with his good looks."

"Bob knows nothing about it. The cards were given by your maid to Mrs. Brinton's, who in turn gave them to Bettina. It happened that no occasion arose to use them until she was half-way across the Atlantic. The first time they were taken from their box it was found that the ace was missing." Elizabeth looked to Bettina, who nodded her corroboration. Then she continued. "It happened, though, that Mrs. Brinton was ignorant of the one thing which would have made her appreciate what this discovery meant. She knew nothing of what occurred in your house one afternoon at tea time. I do know." She hesitated for a moment. "Shall I tell it?"

Sylvia looked about her at the other women in the room. Eagerly, already gloating over what was to come, they waited for Elizabeth to continue. Her throne was toppling and her subjects, each with the memory of some past unpaid score, were impatient for the fall. Even Vera, the faithful, had turned away and offered no support. She looked at Bettina Brinton. Her face was as inexorable as Elizabeth's.

Sylvia made her decision quickly. She was beaten, and knew it. Elizabeth had said that she could prove the facts about the pack of cards and she was convinced that she could make good her claim. And that interview with Bobby! Did she know all of that, too? That she had begged him—almost on her knees—for his love—and he had refused it? Let these avid-eyed women know that! Never! Better to retire with such tatters of her old supremacy as remained, than to have them completely torn from her back by this girl, against whom she had no weapon.

Slowly, almost lazily, she rose from her chair. Deliberately, she closed the big feather fan which she held in her hand. The eyes of every one in the room were fastened on her. Look for look, she returned their glances. "You are quite right. I did do it—and if the occasion arose, I would do the same thing again." Then she turned to Elizabeth, and with a little bow and almost a smile, continued: "But I did not believe there was a woman in London brave enough to tax me with it. My compliments. My reasons for doing it, *you* know." Again she stared scornfully at the other women. "I've never explained my actions to any one, and I shan't begin now. Instead, I shall say good night."

Very erect, she walked across the room. The soft stuff of her dress trailed gracefully on the floor behind her. She paused in the doorway. Defeated, the robes of her supremacy in rags around her, she defied them, and for the last time her subjects felt the stinging lash of her appraisingly contemptuous eyes. Her lips curled, her shoulders lifted almost imperceptibly in a shrug, and more the queen at the end of her reign than she had ever been before, she stepped out into the hall and closed the door behind her. As an exit, it was tremendous, and the momentary silence which followed it was an unwilling acknowledgment of its greatness.

Immediately, Elizabeth was surrounded.

"But why did she do it? Wasn't she in love with Bobby?" Colton demanded, his anger of a few minutes before forgotten. "Tell us!" He almost jumped up and down with impatience.

"Yes, do!" Lady Audley insisted.

"It's too amazing!" Julia Archdale added.

Elizabeth felt a growing repulsion for these ghouls, clamoring for the last detail of the story they were all so eager to repeat. "I've nothing to add to what I've already said. If you want to know why Sylvia did it, you had better ask her," she advised in a tone which conveyed her unflattering estimate of her questioners' courage.

Elizabeth neither corroborated nor denied the various conjectures.

"Poor Austin!" Mrs. Archdale exclaimed. "Think of how shamefully we have all treated him. And he accepted it rather than give Sylvia away. One might have guessed he would do that. For one, I never believed him guilty when it happened. We must try to make it up to him."

Elizabeth smiled. Yes, this was public opinion—as fickle as an idiot child, and as unreasoning.

Elizabeth remained until after all the other guests had said good night. The last one was scarcely out of the door before Bettina rushed across and impulsively threw her arms about her.

"I'm so happy," she cried, kissing her, "happy about everything! You were wonderful. Wasn't she, Tom?" she appealed to her husband, who had been an uncomprehending spectator through it all. "I never expected to see Sylvia beaten at her own game. Weren't you in a panic? But to give the devil his due, she was rather wonderful. In her place, I'd have crawled out of the room on my hands and knees. She has something. It's—it's—" Bettina hesitated, searching for the word.

Her husband supplied it. "I don't know what it is here. In America, it's guts."

Both women laughed, and the tension relaxed.

"I'm trembling from head to foot now that it is all over," Elizabeth confessed. "I think I'd better go home, and we will talk tomorrow."

"And Bobby—aren't you going to let him know?"

"Yes, of course. I'll wire him tonight."

NEXT morning the continued ringing of the doorbell awakened Bobby a good two hours before his usual rising time. His servant had not arrived, and in a very bad humor at having to do it himself, he got up and went to see who it was.

One glance at the message which the uniformed boy gave him when he opened the door, and all of his ill humor was forgotten.

Fifteen minutes later, when Searle arrived, a prodigious noise of splashing and off-key singing was issuing from the bathroom.

"Searle!" he shouted.

"Yes, sir!"

"Start packing. Pack everything. We're going to London today—and we're going there to stay."

A little while later he came into the bedroom where, already, clothes were piled everywhere to be packed. "Leave that for a while. I've a wire I want you to take to the office first."

He sat before his desk, and spreading out Elizabeth's message, re-read it:

> If you come over now you will find the red carpet already put down for you.

Picking up a pen he rapidly scribbled his reply:

> Will arrive by today's air express. Can very well dispense with the red carpet if you will come down to the aërodrome to meet me.

THE END

New Exploits of a Genial Rascal

Mr. Collin's Adventures

Professor Pelotard Takes a Unique Revenge on an Old Enemy—and Detective Kenyon Suddenly Finds Himself Under Arrest

By Frank Heller

IV. Mr. Collin's Holiday Agency

WE HAVE heard how Mr. Collin became a landlord, in fact even the owner of a street, after his adventures in Hamburg with the shoemaker Wörtz from Altona, who was arrested for drunkenness and was de facto a Russian Grand Duke. The possession of such worldly goods confers the enviable position of being able to eject one's tenants, to increase their rent, to refuse to carry out repairs: as a landlord, still more as the owner of a street, it is impossible to imagine that any one can be foolish enough to wish to become a tenant.

As the readers of these stories are aware, Philip Collin, although now a house owner, had once been a tenant himself at 492 Gothenburg Road, where he carried on his practice under the name of Professor Pelotard. But after his adventure with the absent-minded gentleman and Detective Kenyon, Philip decided to change his place of residence. Most of his undertakings were not according to law, and Philip, who was a great philosopher, knew that no one can foretell the future; so he considered it most inadvisable that his address should be known to Kenyon, who had already once tried to get him behind the bars.

In May, 1908, therefore, he made up his mind to find another dwelling-place.

What he wanted was a small unfurnished house of about nine rooms: it was to have a character of its own, to be well built, and situated in some quiet, congenial spot in the West End of London. It had been his dream to find a beautiful street, planted with shady trees, which would remind him of the towns of his country, and where he could fall asleep to the soughing of the wind among the foliage, and on wet summer days listen to the patter of the rain on the roof.

It proved fairly easy to find a house suited to his requirements, but to find such a street was a far more difficult proposition. In vain Philip looked out for it on his walks; nor were his emissaries, Lavertisse and Lescot, more successful. Then one day Philip found himself in Bradford Mansions.

Bradford Mansions lay in the vicinity of Brook Green and was so entirely forgotten by the world that it might just as well have been in Korea. It was composed of eight houses—four on each side—every one of them with its nine rooms and its garden, each with its row of rustling elms in front and all let with one exception. Philip became on the spot a prey to that covetousness for the house of his neighbor which is forbidden by the tenth commandment. He decided that he must at any cost live in Bradford Mansions, and with this object in view began to gather information from the barkeeper round the corner.

He discovered that the street, which, to judge from its appearance, should have belonged to the London County Council, was as a matter of fact subject to Mr. Charles Dickens from one end to the other—this through its proprietor—Mr. Smedley.

Mr. Smedley was a small man of choleric temperament, and of a pronouncedly square-built type. His head was square, his body was square, and his hands and feet were also square. On his square head there grew short, closely cropped white hair. Mr. Smedley's eyebrows, mustache and whiskers were also snow-white: but the remainder of Mr. Smedley was poppy-red, not blood-red, but of lighter tint. His square eyes were hidden by round spectacles, and through these they watched his tenants, his contracts and the delivery of the rents, which had risen by the quare since the street was built.

For Mr. Smedley had built the street himself—every house in it—and he had also chosen its inhabitants according to the dictates of his brain. The tenants of Bradford Mansions were rich bachelors, who all went in for sport; for Mr. Smedley abominated women, children and low rents. Three of them lived on the same side as Mr. Smedley, the side that bore even numbers, 2, 4 and 6—Mr. Smedley himself lived at number 8—and all of them spent the summer, like their landlord, in Norway, where two of them went for climbing, and the third for salmon-fishing. (Yet they were never seen about together, nor with Mr. Smedley.) Of the four tenants on the other side, three spent the summer in Canada and the fourth was dead. He had died only recently, and thus Number 5 Bradford Mansions had become vacant.

Philip was given these details by the bar-keeper, whereupon he set out to look for Mr. Smedley, but only found a Mr. Johnson, whose real name was Jönsson and who not only was a Swede but also came from Småland. This, however, Philip learned much later. Mr. Johnson was Mr. Smedley's right-hand man and looked after everything which concerned Bradford Mansions, apart from the actual letting of the houses.

If Mr. Smedley was square, Mr. Johnson was oval. His whole body, which was on a gigantic scale, was oval, but his hands were the most gigantic part of him, and his face was the most oval. He had protruding cheek-bones burnt red from a bilberry-picking childhood; he had watery blue eyes and flaxen hair. In the summer, Mr. Johnson used to wear a yellowish white suit, which gave him the appearance of a Swedish match, with his long, yellow-white body and reddish brown face. He spent all his summers in London, for although Mr. Smedley used, when introducing him, to call him "my right hand, Mr. Johnson, from Norway," he never took him to Norway, his supposed mother country. He simply left him behind in London to keep an eye on Bradford Mansions in the absence of its tenants.

TO PHILIP'S disappointment, his visits both to Mr. Johnson and to his master were unproductive. He was immediately informed that in order to qualify as a tenant for Bradford Mansions it was essential to be a bachelor and a sportsman. After Philip had declared that he was both, Mr. Johnson drew his attention to the importance of being a *keen* sportsman, for the amount of the rent was fixed in direct proportion to the tenant's interest in sport. This was one of Mr. Smedley's principles. He then showed him over Number 5 and asked Philip to call again the next day. Philip did so and on this occasion found the square-built Mr. Smedley at home. The latter stared at him through his round spectacles and expressed a desire to know whether he was a bachelor.

Philip replied that he was a bachelor on most occasions.

Mr. Smedley (very angrily): A gentleman does not joke about these things.

Philip: Neither do I.

Mr. Smedley: Are you a bachelor or not?

Philip: Yes, always.

Mr. Smedley: What is your chief form of sport?

Philip: I drive a car.

Mr. Smedley: I don't care a rap for that. I want to know what sport you go in for?

Philip: Motoring is my only sport.

Mr. Smedley (gasping): Sport! Motoring a sport! Your only sport! Out you go, sir! Such cheek—a motorist to want to become my tenant! It is a wonder that I don't drop dead on the spot.

Philip: Well, in that case I might become a tenant in Bradford Mansions, after all.

Mr. Smedley: No, sir; for I have made the necessary provisions in my will. Out with you.

Philip: In that case, I will bid you good morning.

At the conclusion of this interview, Philip left Mr. Smedley's presence deeply chagrined. A cheeky little upstart to treat an honest tenant, addicted to motoring, like a criminal! By Jove! That simply cried for vengeance, and Philip vowed that he would not forget it, should the occasion arise. His resentment increased twofold when he heard a week later that the house had been let to no other than the person on whose account he wished to leave Number 492 Gothenburg Road, namely Detective Kenyon. Mr. Kenyon had not rented the house by himself, although a keen sportsman, for his means were not sufficient for that; but he had taken it with a friend. Evidently after the arrest of the forger gang he had got on in his profession, and it was not without resentment that Philip now recalled the fact that it was his own assistance in the affair which had helped Mr. Kenyon to snap up Bradford Mansions before his very eyes.

Irritated by his bad luck, he took leave of Gothenburg Road at the beginning of June and, observing the rules of caution, moved into a quiet street near Holland Park, which more or less answered his requirements.

Some time passed. Philip's affairs occasionally took him into the neighborhood of Bradford Mansions and each time a pang of bitterness pierced his heart. One fine day, however, he noticed that all the houses stood empty, with their blinds drawn down—with the exception of Number 5, outside which he found Mr. Johnson watching two packers.

"How do you do, Mr. Johnson?" said Philip. "Shutting up here, too?"

"Yes, sir," said Mr. Johnson. "Mr. Kenyon and Mr. Cane are leaving tonight for Switzerland."

"Are they going to stay away long?" Philip asked.

"Until August or September, sir."

"Lucky devils," remarked Philip. "Then everybody will be away."

"Yes, sir; with the exception of myself," Mr. Johnson said with a sigh.

"Is that so, Mr. Johnson?" said Philip, and went on his way, without giving the matter further thought.

ONE Saturday evening about a week later, when London was as sweltering as the desert, Philip was walking slowly along Piccadilly. In spite of the traffic in the streets, the town had a holiday look. But it was sultry, dreadfully sultry, and Philip turned into Hyde Park to get a breath of fresh air.

After walking a few steps, he sat down on a seat, taking no notice of another man who was already sitting there.

Suddenly, however, he threw a stray glance at him and much to his surprize recognized the gigantic Mr. Johnson. He was puffing away at a twopenny cigar, whose light was reflected on his brown cheek-bones and in his watery blue eyes. His hat, a stiff felt that was hardly in keeping with his angular head, was tilted backward.

Philip looked at him with amusement and said:

"Good evening, Mr. Johnson."

Mr. Johnson started with that mistrust which is characteristic of his race (we have previously mentioned that he was a Smålander); evidently he did not recognize Philip at first. Then he realized who he was and raised his hand in salute, in doing which, a white folded paper—it looked like a newspaper—slipped from his hand to the ground. Philip politely stooped to pick it up. His astonishment can be imagined when he saw that it was a number of the *Strix*.

Strix! The quintessence of Swedish wit, Albert Engström's *Strix*. It was as if a window had been thrown open to his past and a dove, bearing an olive branch, had come fluttering through it: a number of the *Strix!*

"Why, Mr. Johnson!" he exclaimed. "Are you a Swede?"

He stretched out his hand, which Mr. Johnson took carefully between his huge paws; while his lips, unloosed by some secret spring, long unoiled, gave vent to words in the purest Smaland dialect.

"Yes, certainly I am a Smalander."

Then he paused as if astonished at the sound of his own voice.

"But you are not a Swede, sir?"

"I should jolly well say I am," said Philip heartily.

"Is it possible? Is it possible? And I have not spoken Swedish for the last fourteen years."

"Surely you haven't been here so long?"

"Yes, yes," confirmed Mr. Johnson thoughtfully. "I left when I was twenty—Dackemala, the place was called—"

"I know it," murmured Philip softly.

"You know Dackemâla! Is it possible? And I have not been there for fourteen years. Do you know any of the people? The Baron, perhaps, or even the station-master? No? Oh, dear! Oh, dear, how often I have wanted to go back!"

Philip started. In his inmost being he felt the birth pangs of a sudden idea. Mr. Smedley had treated him badly; he still had a bone to pick with Kenyon. How would it be, if . . .

"But, Mr. Johnson," he said, "a man in your position must be able to take a trip to his home occasionally."

Mr. Johnson considered him with newly awakened suspicion in his eyes. This was probably a fellow countryman of the type that plays on a man's patriotic feelings in order to fleece him.

"Of course," he remarked cautiously, "I've put a bit by"—Mr. Johnson had already saved 8,000 crowns in Swedish money—"but it is not much, sir."

Philip saw where the shoe pinched and at once changed his tactics.

"You misunderstand me, Mr. Johnson. I meant that you must have plenty of time on your hands in the summer."

"Well, yes, that's so," Mr. Johnson agreed. "I really haven't got anything to do the whole day, the whole week, the whole summer except to water the trees—that's all, for all the gentlemen are away in Norway and Can*a*da. Many, many a time, I've thought to myself: 'Now you must go abroad, too, go home to Sweden for once, visit your people in Dackemala."

Philip glanced quickly at Mr. Johnson—there was a mute, inexpressible longing in his watery blue eyes for the country of his birth. He swiftly handed him a cigar from his case and asked:

"Are you free tonight, Mr. Johnson?"

"Well, yes," Mr. Johnson answered hesitatingly, obviously afraid of his companion's advances.

"Then come home with me," Philip said heartily, "and have a plain sandwich or two, a gin and a glass of punch. I too, have not spoken Swedish for many a long year and I can assure you it would also be a treat for me. Come! It is nearly half-past eight."

Mr. Johnson gazed at the elegantly dressed man with eyes in which the words "sandwiches, gin, punch" had kindled a spark, but through which an inborn watchfulness was also throwing a strong searchlight on the stranger.

A short struggle ensued, and then, reassuring himself with the thought that, after all, he had no valuables on him, he bowed stiffly and said:

"Thanks very much. It is really exceedingly kind of you. But I am not dressed so that I can come. Some other time, perhaps."

Of all natural instincts of a Smalander, the most tenacious is, maybe, the desire to be invited a dozen times before accepting: but even that was overcome by Philip's rhetorical gifts of persuasion, and, at last, amicably smoking, the two left Hyde Park together in silence.

ON A mild summer evening, two days later, Mr. Johnson sat on the deck of a steamer going from Harwich to Esbjerg in Denmark, with a ticket in his pocket for Malmö. He scarcely knew himself how it had come about.

He had left Hyde Park in company with Mr. Collin and had been conveyed to his house in a cab. Mr. Johnson had never seen anything so elegant, either at Mr. Smedley's or at any of his tenants'. His host had taken him all over it, had shown him his cars (he had two, a blue and a green one); and they had gone into the smoking-room. Had Mr. Johnson already dined? No, he had not—at least he hadn't had much, he hastened to add in direct contradiction to truth. Would he like a whisky before their meal? Mr. Johnson was agreeable. They therefore had a peg in the smoking-room, while they discussed Mr. Smedley, who was really something of a skinflint—also his tenants.

In the middle of this conversation they were asked into the very fine dining-room, where a Swedish 'Smörgåsbord' awaited them. There were lobsters and anchovies, meat patties, omelets and radishes; there were fried herring, and smoked herring in leek sauce, and pickled herring. With this Mr. Johnson and Philip partook of many different sorts of *aqua vitae*—there were also vodka and raw spirits—and then the strange gentleman inquired whether they should not now try a real Swedish meal? Mr. Johnson, who was quite ill with his longing for Sweden, assented and stuffed himself with brown beans and fried bacon, braised ox tongue and mashed potatoes, and finally pancakes with marmalade and whipped cream.

When he was unable to manage another mouthful, had finished his beer and refused wine, they went into the smoking-room again, where they found a brave array of cognac, coffee, and punch. Mr. Johnson was invited to sit on the sofa, which he did, after a great deal of persuasion. Then they began on the coffee and the punch, which Mr. Johnson had not tasted for fourteen years and which seemed to him like nectar. With this they smoked the best cigars and the unknown gentleman became communicative.

First they spoke about *Strix*, to which comic paper Mr. Johnson was a subscriber, and they told each other anecdotes from it until they could no longer speak for laughing. They also emptied many a glass to the memory of Albert Engström, the greatest of all Smalanders. Then Philip gradually brought up the subject of Dackemala—how lovely it must be there now in summertime, when the sky hangs deep blue over the lakes, and the sun burns down on the roofs of the houses, and the steam rises from the broad marshes. There is a smell of brown beans and coffee from the cottages and of resin from the pine trees, sweating in the sun. Below, in the lake, the reeds stand closely pressed together, like a forest; in the tepid water, the pike spring and at twilight the perch begin to rise. Lord! What a country! In the gardens the gooseberry bushes are yellow with berries, the cherry trees are in full bloom, and at night, in the bends of the road, can be heard the sound of many concertinas.

So spoke Philip Collin, while Swedish punch flowed in streams; and Mr. Johnson's heart expanded as he listened. After a time he was so desperately tipsy and homesick that, weeping, he began to talk about his old friends in Dackemåla. And then his host, with the curious name of Pelotard, asked: "But why not? Why not go home? Home to Dackemala for a visit to your people to impress them with the sight of your English clothes and money!"

"Impossible!" sobbed Mr. Johnson. "The trees must be watered and the houses kept in order."

"That is true," said his companion, "but I'll see to that; one of my servants can look after all that for you."

"No, my dear sir, it is impossible," replied Mr. Johnson with a sigh.

"It's easily managed," said Philip. "Just trust to me."

"No, no, if Mr. Smedley heard of it, I should lose my job."

"Mr. Smedley will never hear of it; I'll guarantee that."

"Really?" asked Mr. Johnson, in whose soul the demon of distrust struggled with the demon of great longing.

"Certainly, Mr. Johnson," replied Philip. "I am rich; you have seen my house and my cars, here! Have a look at my pass book."

Mr. Johnson took the pass-book, read the total—£260,000—and returned it as carefully as if it had been a newborn infant.

"Well, Mr. Johnson, it will give me pleasure to be responsible for your little holiday and, so that you may feel quite happy about it, take this check, which you can cash on your return, if you are not satisfied."

"What is the amount?" asked Mr. Johnson.

"Five hundred pounds," was the answer.

Mr. Johnson nearly fainted. Five hundred pounds! Why, that was more than he had saved in all these years! "I'll go, my dear sir," he said.

MR. JOHNSON'S visit to his home proved to be an unqualified success, and he had already begun—with sadness in his heart—to count the days that were left before his departure, when one morning a letter arrived from London which filled him with conflicting emotions and the Dackemåla post office with a diversity of violent expletives. This letter was written by Mr. Pelotard and ran as follows:

DEAR MR. JOHNSON:

Just a few lines to let you know how Bradford Mansions are getting on and to inquire whether you enjoyed your trip. I do hope that this is the case and that possibly you would not be averse to prolonging it indefinitely—in other words, to remaining in Sweden.

I must confess to you that in your absence I have taken the liberty of doing something which might possibly render your return a little difficult. I have let the whole street for the summer.

I am unfortunately too pressed for time to give you many details, so let the following suffice:

Five hundred pounds have been netted as rent for the whole street; this, plus a further £200, which I wish to pay as compensation for my having acted without your consent, will be transmitted to you by wire, if you will inform me, also by wire, that you accept my offer and remain in Sweden.

If you cannot do that, I fear you will have to return at once, that the street may be put in order before Mr. Smedley's return. It wants it badly. Looking forward to your telegram, I remain your friend,

PROFESSOR PELOTARD.

P.S. Don't worry. Mr. Smedley will never find you, for he will of course look for you in Norway.

In the course of twenty minutes Mr. Johnson read this over ten times, his small blue eyes agape with wonder, and his bony fingers holding the letter as though it were the veil of the mystery of mysteries. We need not trouble to ascertain the nature of his thoughts when he finally managed to collect them; and what he said when he had regained his speech, we simply dare not print. For Mr. Johnson, like all his race, was a Tartuffe and pretended to be deeply illuded by Professor Pelotard, while, in reality he was in the seventh heaven of delight; £500 plus £200 equals £700; £400 he had put aside during his many years of faithful service; all in all, he would have £1,100, and he would be the richest man in Dackemala. In his heart he blessed the Professor, and his joy was only marred by wondering how much the Professor was getting out of this affair. He hastened to send the following wire:

Professor Pelotard,
Poste Restante, General Post Office, London.
Accept. JOHNSON.

Thus, assured of a bright, peaceful future, Mr. Johnson makes his bow and passes from this tale.

THE scene of our story now shifts to the Black Forest. Two very dusty-looking men are seated outside a little inn. The table is spread with eggs, ham, beer and cheese. In their hands are some back numbers of English newspapers which they devour with the same speed as the food. At last they have finished the papers and their meal; pipes are lit and they both lean back, tired out, their hands folded behind their necks.

One of them is red-haired and, gazing sleepily at the woods, he mumbles:

"Fine country this, Cane. Different from London at this time of year. How can people stick London, Cane?"

"H'm!" the other murmurs between clouds of smoke.

After some minutes he glances casually at the table littered with newspapers and says: "Well, there appears to be some one after all who likes London in summer. Have you seen this advertisement, Kenyon?"

"No, what is it all about?" Kenyon has pulled his cap over his eyes and seems to be dropping off to sleep.

"Damned long advertisement," says his friend Cane. " 'The summer in London,' it begins in leaded type.

"London in summer up to the middle of July is the meeting-place of the British Aristocracy. London in summer is the El Dorado of pleasure-seeking provincials: London in summer is the right place for YOU, if you can find the Right House! What are your requirements? That it should be comfortable—that it should be central—that it should be cheap. Hundreds of houses fulfil these conditions. But if you are the type of person we want to reach by means of this advertisement, then you will also demand that your dwelling should be cool and beautifully situated, that it should be free from the noise and the reeking fumes of the main thoroughfares, but at the same time that it should enjoy all the advantages of their proximity. All this—comfort, reasonable rent and an admirably central position—you will find combined in the six luxuriously appointed houses which Professor Pelotard's Holiday Agency can place at the disposal of the public."

Kenyon suddenly interrupted his friend's ironical recital.

"What name did you say? Pelotard?"

"Yes, Pelotard."

"H'm! I know the fellow. What's his little game now? Sly rogue, that! Did I ever tell you that story about the absent-minded gentlemen? Yes? Well, then you do know him. Six luxuriously appointed houses. Does it say anything else?"

"I see it's that bounder again," said Mr. Cane. "No, there's nothing else."

Kenyon was just beginning to doze off comfortably, when he was roused by a yell and the noise of an overturned chair. Looking up sharply, he saw that Cane had kicked away his chair and was jumping about in front of him, wildly waving the paper.

"For heaven's sake, what's up with you?" Kenyon cried in dismay. "Sunstroke?"

"Sunstroke? Sunstroke! Kenyon, have you ever heard of misprints in English advertisements?"

"Rarely, very rarely. What—"

"Is there another place in London called Bradford Mansions?"

"Not as far as I know. No, there is certainly no other. . . . But what is the matter?"

"Have a look at this advertisement. Have I gone mad? Do you know where he lives and what houses those are he is letting? Read—go on—read! And you'll see."

Kenyon took the paper and gazed at the spot to which his choleric little friend was pointing. It was at the bottom of the advertisement and consisted of five lines, which ran as follows:

> Please apply to Professor Pelotard's offices during summer months, at 5 Bradford Mansions, London W. The houses which the agency has for disposal are in the same street and may be viewed between 12 and 2 P.M.

Kenyon dropped the paper and gazed open-mouthed at Cane.

"Impossible," he whispered hoarsely. "Quite impossible."

"Impossible!" his friend snorted at him. "Impossible? How the devil can you explain it, then? Is there another Bradford Mansions? Do you really think it is a misprint?"

He snatched up another number of the paper and found a precisely similar advertisement.

"All the papers don't make the same mistake, do they? The scoundrel—the blasted scoundrel! Did you ever see anything like it? Steals our house in our absence, opens an office in it and lets the remainder of the street to summer visitors. Six luxuriously appointed houses! Yes, your friend, the Professor, is a regular scamp—a thorough scoundrel!"

Kenyon let fly:

"My friend—the Professor—my friend? Why not your friend just as much? I once let the fellow slip through my fingers, that's all."

"Yes, and that's more than enough!" shrieked Mr. Cane. "You now see the consequences. How is it possible? Mr. Smedley had an agent there! What has become of him, I wonder."

"More than likely he has murdered or bribed him. That would be nothing to him. I think I remember hearing an incredible story about a Mr. Isaacs before I left."

"I should think that we have talked enough about the scoundrel," yelled Mr. Cane. "What steps do you propose to take, Kenyon?"

"Wire to the police," Kenyon answered without hesitation.

"Of course, you would! Don't you think he deserves some other punishment? Are you a detective, Kenyon, or are you not?"

"I have been called one," Kenyon said, flushing at his friend's rudeness.

"Well, so I imagined. And you, who have caught the counterfeiters—you are going to let the police have the glory of catching this impudent scoundrel, who has stolen your own house? People wouldn't half laugh at you, would they!"

"They won't get a chance if you do it all yourself," retorted Kenyon angrily. "I am man enough to catch this gentleman single-handed. I have done far more difficult things than that."

"Now, that's enough talk about the rascal. While we stand here cackling, he is throwing our family pictures into the street and walking about in our underclothing."

THAT evening the two friends left hurriedly for England, where they arrived on Saturday, the 16th of August. Without wasting time in claiming their luggage, they jumped into a taxi and tore along to Bradford Mansions. Kenyon, whose ardor had somewhat cooled, was obviously nervous, but Cane on the other hand was more than ever thirsting for revenge.

They found Bradford Mansions as they had left them, the only noticeable change being that the street swarmed with children. Children everywhere—at the windows and on the pavement—the Professor's holiday agency seemed to have populated the whole place with families blessed with a numerous progeny. As may be remembered, such families were the reverse of a blessing in the eyes of Mr. Smedley!

With an involuntary smile at the Professor's impudence, Kenyon stopped the cab at the corner of the street; they both quickly alighted and rushed up to Number 5. To the sound of a war whoop from little Cane, they ran up the stairs, tore open the front door and plunged into the house. Kenyon examined the ground floor and Mr. Cane the upper stories. Two minutes later they met again in the hall.

The house was untenanted.

They looked at each other and all around them. Nothing appeared to have been altered since May, except that, if possible, the furniture seemed to be arranged a little more artistically. The family pictures, of which Cane had spoken, hung on the walls, well dusted; and a rapid inspection of the bedrooms showed that not a single garment was missing. But for the yelling of the children in the street, they might almost have imagined that the whole thing was a trick played on them by their imagination.

Kenyon, whose nervousness was steadily on the increase, suddenly remembered a bottle of Ainslie's whisky, which they left standing in the smoking-room on their departure, and he entered the room in order to fortify himself with it. A shrill exclamation brought Cane to his side.

"Cane! Cane!" Kenyon called out. "The scoundrel is more cunning than we thought. Here is a letter addressed to me. What do you bet that he'll escape us?"

"Escape!" roared Cane. "Well, you're a nice detective!"

Without answering, Kenyon opened the envelope and read the typed letter:

DEAR MR. KENYON:

Since you are returning to London, you will very naturally want your rooms for yourself and your friend Cane, who, no doubt, will sing your praises like a new Watson. I therefore hasten to vacate them, leaving them, I consider, in perfect order. The only liberty I have taken is to make a few alterations in the dining-room and your study, which I hope will meet with your approval.

You wonder, perhaps, at my audacity in settling down in your own house without your leave? But you may perchance remember that you caused me great financial loss in May, when you broke up my business in Southampton Row, and, apart from that, you were kind enough at the time, repeatedly to offer me free lodgings for some time ahead. You must, therefore, excuse my taking seriously what, after all, was perhaps merely a thoughtless joke on your part. You are perhaps also surprised at the success which has crowned my enterprise, or that the police made no objection to my little holiday agency? May I draw your attention to the fact that this merely proves a very old theory: go to work openly and do not shun the light of day, and you will have nothing to fear from the police.

Hoping we may soon meet again,

Your grateful friend,

PROFESSOR PELOTARD.

P.S. Would you be good enough to tell Mr. Cane that no gentleman wears pants like his nowadays? I have taken the liberty of leaving him a pair of mine, as a sample with regard to future purchases. I also made so bold as to exchange your bottle of Ainslie's for one of Jameson's. I should like to hear your opinion of the two brands, when a suitable occasion presents itself.

SHOUTS of fury from both Cane and Kenyon punctuated the reading of this epistle and its courteous ending elicited an increased volume of sound and profanity. When, after a bout of cursing which lasted steadily for six minutes, they were able to take breath again, Mr. Cane said:

"How could he know that we should come today?"

"Idiot! How do you know that he *did* know?" Kenyon rejoined, filled with cold fury against the Professor and the whole world. "Isn't it possible for that letter to be ten days old? Now then, come along. We must catch that man—dead or alive."

They rushed out, caught a taxi, and within half an hour were in Gothenburg Road, the Professor's old home, which Kenyon already knew. But at the sight of the house, he was seized by a premonition, which boded no good. It was obviously uninhabited. The windows had the same murky look as they had before the Professor's time, the grass in the garden was of rank growth; and a gigantic signboard announced to the street at large that the house was to let.

Kenyon got out and called on the landlady of the boarding-house next door.

"Could you give me Professor Pelotard's address?"

"Professor Pelotard?" the landlady repeated derisively. "Who ever knew anything about him?"

"When did he leave?"

"At the beginning of June. Why do you want to know?"

"I am a detective and in search of him," Kenyon replied. "Who moved his belongings? I will give you a reward if you can tell me who it was."

"I am sorry I can't tell you, for he did not hire a furniture remover. He did it himself with his own men and a lorry he had got for the purpose."

"Well, well," Kenyon said meditatively. "I might have guessed as much. If you should find out anything further, please write to me. Here is the address."

With that he went back to the taxi.

"138 Southampton Row," he told the driver, and on their way there he informed Cane of the discouraging result of his inquiries.

"I knew it, I knew it," Kenyon repeated over and over again. "I knew he would give us the slip. We should have sent a wire."

"Give us the slip?" Cane shouted, beside himself with fury. "To hear you say such a thing—you who have caught the whole forger gang! And now you are scared of one swindler!"

Thank the Lord, the Professor's business in Southampton Row still existed! Kenyon jumped out of the taxi, and entered the shop to find himself facing a tall, lanky, bearded and bespectacled Scotsman, who asked what he wanted in none too friendly a fashion.

"Could you give me the address of Mr. Lavertisse?" Kenyon asked straight out. It will be remembered that the Professor carried on his business under that name.

"Mr. Lavertisse's address?" the Scotsman snorted angrily. "I wish I knew it myself."

"Really? What is your objection to Mr. Lavertisse?"

"What I have got against Mr. Lavertisse? Only that he has swindled and fooled me to the top of his bent, if you want to know. That's all."

Kenyon nodded with comprehension. "Well, I can quite believe that."

"He showed me books," the gray-headed Scotsman continued, getting hoarser and hoarser, "proving that he made £5,000 a year, and this was confirmed by the bank. I bought the business and stock for £10,000, a ridiculous price, as I thought at the time, and now I scarcely take five pounds a week. His address! I only wish I had it, and I bet it wouldn't be long before he changed it."

Kenyon had to laugh.

"That you make so little is probably your own fault," he said, going toward the door. "I expect you do not follow the same methods in business as Mr. Lavertisse—and that's where the difference comes in."

He entered the taxi, followed by a curse from the Scotsman, and told the cabby to stop at the corner of Holborn, where he entered the London County and Westminster Bank.

"Could you give me the address of one of your clients—a Mr. Lavertisse?" he asked the cashier.

"Mr. Lavertisse? He closed his account with us in May and went to Paris. We gave him a letter of transfer to the Crédit Lyonnais. But when we recently looked for his address on behalf of the new owner of his business [Kenyon smiled] it was found that he had drawn out the whole of his deposit, and had left no trace of his whereabouts."

KENYON cursed volubly as he left the bank. No trace! No clue! Was the blackguard going to escape him? It almost looked like it, and in his heart of hearts he had to admit that he had feared this all along. The Professor was not the man to make any ordinary mistake.

With downcast looks he returned to Cane, who was furiously smoking a pipe in the taxi.

"Well?" the latter called out.

"No good!"

"No good? If that isn't the limit!"

"Yes, that's so."

"What are you going to do?"

"Get a warrant for his arrest, first of all, so that I can rope him in, wherever I should meet him."

"Wherever you should meet him—that means nowhere!" remarked Mr. Cane bitterly.

"Perhaps," Kenyon admitted.

"Disgusting! And you call yourself a detective, and don't know enough to catch an ordinary thief, who steals our house and makes fun of our clothes? And you are the man who caught the counterfeiters!"

"No!" Kenyon retorted, driven almost mad by the constant reiteration of this fact. "It was not I who caught them; it was the Professor himself, if you must know."

Mr. Cane became speechless and looked at him a long time. Then, with quick decision, he got out of the taxi.

"Good-by," he said. "I have no time to drive about the streets with a man who owes his reputation to an ordinary crook. I hope the Professor will help you with his own arrest, just as he helped you to arrest the counterfeiters."

Cane went and Kenyon, with a shrug of his shoulders, continued on his way to Scotland Yard, where he obtained the warrant. As he put it into the pocket of his overcoat an idea occurred to him.

Mr. Isaacs! Mr. Ernest Isaacs! He had had a little affair with the Professor, so the story went round the clubs. Perhaps he could give him some clue, if nobody else could.

Kenyon tore along to the City just as every one was turning out to lunch. Mr. Isaacs's offices were working at high pressure, for the chief was present, and so Kenyon sent in his card with a note on it: "With reference to Professor Pelotard."

Within half a minute a dumfounded official—for usually Mr. Isaacs was less accessible than an Indian prince—conducted him into the presence of the great financier.

"You have something to tell me about Professor Pelotard?" Mr. Isaacs said without greeting him. "What has that scoundrel been up to now?"

"Nothing very special," Kenyon said offhandedly. "Only stolen my house, while I was away on a holiday, and let all the other houses in the street."

"All the other houses in the street?" Mr. Isaacs repeated with amazement. "But was there nobody there?"

"Only an agent, and he has presumably been killed or sold into bondage."

"Let the whole street—marvelous!" Mr. Isaacs repeated once more. "How much can he have made on that?"

"How do I know? Perhaps a few hundreds. In any case he has disappeared. I thought you might possibly tell me where—"

Mr. Isaacs's manner immediately became frozen, and he interrupted Kenyon with a mistrustful look in his eyes.

"What do you mean? I? But I don't know the man at all."

"Excuse me," Kenyon said, embarrassed, for he saw that he had made a dreadful *faux pas*. "I was told that you had something to do with him—"

"I?" exclaimed Mr. Isaacs. "Never in my life. I never have anything to do with people like that. Let the whole street—too delightful!"

Mr. Isaacs broke into a guffaw, but suddenly stopped. "There *is* one thing I can tell you, after all. I know where he usually takes his lunch. At least he used to—at Charlot's in Fox Street. I go there now and then. But you won't catch him—he is too wily for you."

"Good-by," Kenyon said abruptly, hurriedly leaving the sanctum of the financier, whom he still heard roaring with laughter as he shut the door.

HE HASTENED to Charlot's, which turned out to be a tiny restaurant, or rather an eating-house, on the ground floor of a house in Fox Street. It was at the moment quite empty with the exception of an old Italian, who was sitting at one of the tables, enjoying a plateful of ham and macaroni. Kenyon hung his overcoat on a hook, for it was close in the small room, tapped on his glass and ordered a light meal. The Professor should not escape him—he had made up his mind about that—and so he sat down, with his back toward the door, but so near to it that he could see any one entering or leaving the premises. He looked at his watch—it was just half-past one—and started with a preoccupied air on the *hors-d'œuvre*.

The impudent scoundrel! What on earth had given him the idea of this hoax? Probably he had done it merely for the fun of the thing and not for the sake of any gain to be derived from it. What could he have done with Smedley's factotum? A faithful old servant, as Smedley averred, with twelve years' service to his credit, and from Norway, where servants are proverbially trustworthy. Could he have murdered him? Not very probably, but still, it was all rather strange. Kenyon had his first course served to him—fish cake with mushrooms in shells; then he looked up. The old Italian had paid his bill and was now hobbling along to the washing-basin to wash his hands. Kenyon watched him put on his overcoat very slowly and vanish through the door with his broad-brimmed hat. Kenyon began to feel nervous.

"Of course, just my luck, the ruffian won't turn up today," he thought. "Was that letter really put there today? Impossible to say, for it was typed; but more than likely it has been lying there for a long time. Whatever made me confess about the false coiners? Now Cane will din it into my ears every day. That cursed Pelotard! If only the beastly fellow would come!" His thoughts were suddenly interrupted by footsteps. He looked up—and there stood Professor Pelotard, smiling courteously.

Kenyon jumped up, trembling with rage, and, hurling the table aside, made a dash for Philip. But before he could realize it, he felt his hands clasped as in a vise by the man he wanted to arrest, over whose shoulders he perceived the familiar features of a London policeman.

"What's the meaning of this?" Kenyon yelled, spluttering with indignation. "Constable, do your duty! Arrest this man! This is Professor Pelotard, for whose arrest I hold a warrant. Do you hear, constable?"

The constable was a young man of colossal build, with a face somewhat lacking intelligence and a sparse flaxen mustache. From his whole appearance it was apparent that he was not a man to be trifled with, and this was also emphasized by his voice, as he answered roughly:

"No nonsense, please. I know my duty quite well, and that is to arrest you, my man. You are Professor Pelotard. Just you come along with me to the police station."

"But li-listen, con-constable!" shouted Kenyon, stuttering with emotion. "What's the meaning of this? Where is your warrant? How do you know that I am Professor Pelotard?"

The constable grinned. "How do I know that you are Professor Pelotard? You gave yourself away there, didn't you? I know it from this gentleman, who is Detective Kenyon, and who has the warrant for your arrest."

"That's right, and none of your dodges," the pseudo detective exclaimed sternly. "Your little game is up, and none too soon. The trickiest swindler we have had in London for a long time: first that affair with the absent-minded gentlemen, then with Mr. Isaacs, and now this business with Bradford Mansions. But at last we have got you. Here is the order for your arrest—if you want to read it."

Kenyon almost had a fit when he saw the Professor draw from his pocket the very warrant he had himself obtained that morning, and show it to the constable and to him. Speechless with exasperation, he had only one thought: how had it been possible? Then the explanation flashed across his mind: the Italian! A disguise! His overcoat! He had forgotten about the warrant in his overcoat pocket! Oh, what an idiot he had been—what a blasted fool!

"Constable," he shrieked, "I've been robbed! The warrant belongs to me. This man has stolen it from my pocket. It is he who is Professor Pelotard. I am Detective Kenyon, and not he. Arrest him, constable! Do you hear what I say?"

THE policeman was no longer listening; gripping him tightly by the arm, he said: "Now, stop that row! Just come along quietly and remember that anything you say will be used as evidence against you."

In spite of all Kenyon's entreaties and threats, he led him out by the door. Philip threw a couple of shillings across the table for the landlord and himself fetched Kenyon's overcoat. Then he joined the policeman, who was waiting outside the public house with the prisoner in a side street.

"Here's your overcoat, Professor," he said. "Wait here a moment, constable. I'll go and fetch a cab from the corner."

"Constable, for God's sake, do listen to what I say. If you let him go away now, you'll be sorry for it ever after. He is Professor Pelotard and he is running away. Oh! I could split with rage. Can't you understand me, constable?"

The policeman answered by giving a vigorous shake and ordering him to be quiet. A crowd had gathered round them, and suddenly a car stopped behind Kenyon. As he tried to turn round, he caught sight of Mr. Ernest Isaacs, who was looking at him with astonishment.

"What has happened?" the financial magnate asked, puzzled. "Are you under arrest, Mr. Kenyon?"

"This ass of a constable has arrested me and has let the Professor escape," Kenyon shouted, beside himself.

"Arrested you and let the Professor get off?" Mr. Isaacs sank back in his seat, half choked with laughter. "Just like him—just like him. No, really he's about the limit."

"But can't you at least tell the constable that I am not the Professor?" Kenyon implored. "Perhaps we can catch him even now. Do tell him who I am, Mr. Isaacs."

"I can certainly swear that you are not the Professor," the financier at last managed to get out. "Is the warrant for Professor Pelotard, constable? Yes? Well, then 'pon my word, you've made a fine hash of things—arresting the detective instead of the offender. But it's just like the Professor—just like him—he does really go a bit too far."

The constable reddened and scratched his head anxiously. He didn't know Mr. Isaacs, but after all—a gentleman in a motor-car—and that detective who did not turn up . . .

"You are not Professor Pelotard, sir?" he asked Kenyon dejectedly.

Kenyon glared at him and shouted in a voice that was scarcely intelligible:

"That's what I have been trying to hammer into your wooden head for the last fifteen minutes. I am Detective Kenyon. The warrant was stolen and now you have let him escape."

He gripped the constable by the arm and almost ran down the Strand. Gasping with merriment, Mr. Isaacs followed them. But the search was in vain. The Professor had long since made himself scarce: Kenyon, who was recognized by a chief constable, was released. Bathed in perspiration and exhausted with rage, he was standing at the corner of the street with Mr. Isaacs, who was faint with laughter, when the latter suddenly said:

"You are dropping a letter, Mr. Kenyon."

Kenyon looked down and saw that a letter was just falling out of the pocket of his overcoat—that cursed overcoat which was to blame for half his troubles. The sight of the letter made him turn pale.

"From the Professor," he murmured.

"Indeed? From the Professor?" Mr. Isaacs ejaculated, full of interest. "Let's read it, do!"

KENYON hesitatingly opened the letter and, with Mr. Isaacs by his side, read the following:

DEAR MR. KENYON:

Once again, I should like to warn you. Never have anything to do with the police. You have seen for yourself: these people are absolutely incorrigible. Imitate my example and arrest your criminals yourself. Have recourse to the stupidity of the police only when it is allied with brute force.

Just in passing, let me caution you to be a little more careful with your warrants. If you always carry them about with you in that particular fashion, they may quite easily fall into the hands of dishonest people. Au revoir. In haste.

Your friend,
PROFESSOR PELOTARD.

July *EVERYBODY'S*—out June 14

A Complete Novel

The Hired Heart — By George F. Worts
Swift-moving narrative with a unique motif

Short Stories

The Blue-Eyed Lie — By Frank Heller
Mr. Collin adventures in and out of love
The Battle of Couets — By Oscar Lewis
Delightful humor of a high order
Saving Danny Deever — By Sam Carson
Another of Carson's inimitable racetrack stories
God-Horses — By Phoebe O'Neall Faris
Romance with a touch of whimsicality
Li Po Comes to New York — By Gordon Malherbe Hillman
A cosmopolitan story with an oriental slant
Tosca of the Tenements — By Stanley Olmsted
Artistic temperaments—and fair play

Three Big Serials

The Finger of Fire — By George Kibbe Turner
A new novel. See announcement on page 44
The Devonshers — By Honoré Willsie Morrow
A story of the West and a girl who played a losing hand
The Citadel — By Joseph Husband
Stirring adventure of the sea and a man's fight for the woman he loves

July *EVERYBODY'S*—out June 14

Shrieking Silence

Petie the Monkey Finds One Terror in the Alabama Swamp More Fearful to Him Than Any Living Thing

By Artemus Calloway

THE swamp was strangely quiet. There was something about the stillness remindful of the hush that creeps over the crowd at a circus in the last few seconds preceding some new and thrilling feat.

But to the swamp there came no grand and spectacular deed of daring by a performer in spangled tights; no outburst from a full-throated band; no excited cheering from a mob of enthusiastic spectators, telling that the act has ended in a blaze of glory.

Instead, the silence held. The silence of the tomb, a fearful, threatening sort of quiet. It was not the usual calm of late afternoon; it was that shrieking silence that comes to the wild only when there is some great fear; a fear that is not understood and, because of that, chills and holds.

Even the monster cypresses fringing the sluggish slough appeared to hold something weird and uncanny. A giant tupelo, not one of its autumn-kissed leaves stirring, stood as if waiting for something strange and unreal to occur. Even the breeze seemed to have fled.

It was yet early dusk, that calm and gentle hour of swamp life that marks the end of activity for some of its creatures and the beginning for others. But there was neither calmness nor gentleness about this quiet; on the contrary, there was a harsh, silent threat, that, because of that silence, seemed to cry aloud.

Five minutes passed and then from an ivy thicket came the faint chirp of a redbird; from a tangle of vines and undergrowth issued the call of a thrush. A leaf rustled; a cypress branch swayed gently; there came the sound of tiny feet pattering across dead and rotting leaves. Fear had departed—the swamp had again come to life.

It was then that a queer little creature eased out of a hollow stump and peered about. This was the second time that the little fellow had appeared in the last few minutes and it was its first appearance that brought fear to the vicinity.

There was something unreal in the presence here of this creature. There was that about the red cap on its head that startled; the scarlet coat about its body, the green trousers on its little legs, the tin cup in the queer little hands. And there was fright in the keen little eyes; trouble was writ large across the wrinkled gray face.

For a moment the stranger stood rigid; then it moved slowly forward. And as it moved another living thing came to a sudden halt, but a halt of a second only.

A hungry boar mink had slipped around a rotten log, hot on the trail of game, and catching one brief glimpse of the red-coated one stopped even more briefly. And then the bloodthirsty one whirled; a shriek of fright such as it had never before uttered burst from its lips, and it was gone. Again that awful quiet came to the swamp, and the fear that gripped the creatures of the wild also clutched and strangled this little creature that was not one of them, yet was here—vainly trying to find companionship.

The red-coated monkey was indeed out of place in this south Alabama swamp. It was, perhaps, the first monkey the swamp creatures had ever seen—and, in all probability, the last they cared to see. There was more than one thing about it that frightened. First, there was the man-scent that yet lingered three days after Petie had wandered away from the camp-fire of his master; second, there was his costume. And then—well, he was just different, something unknown.

Until the last three days Petie had been deliriously happy. For a long time he and Tony had roamed the country, stopping at villages where Tony played the hand organ and Petie danced for pennies, nickels and dimes—and sometimes a quarter.

Then they had reached a little town a mile from the edge of the great swamp. There business had been good and Tony had lingered until nightfall, afterward making camp in a pine grove just outside the village. It was there that Petie had slipped his collar and wandered away.

Wandering, he reached the swamp, traveled farther and farther into the shadows and finally became hopelessly lost. So, for three days he had been vainly trying to find Tony—or any other human being; failing that, any wild thing that would be friendly. While Petie wandered Tony was racing frantically about the country outside the swamp in a vain search for his pet and friend. But Petie knew nothing of this; he knew only that he was having the most terrible experience of his life; that the swamp was indeed an unfriendly place.

For several seconds after the flight of the mink he stood looking about him; then he skipped along around the edge of a little pond, turned away to the right, found a bush containing some red berries, tasted and found them good—ate a handful.

But he carried that strange quiet with him, and found it stifling, crushing. He was lonely—oh, so lonely! How he would have enjoyed playing for just a moment with the raccoon he found at a crawfish pond! The raccoon, however, didn't stop to play. Instead, he uttered one wild scream and made a dash for a tree, and Petie, thinking perhaps that this was part of the desired game, followed.

THE raccoon was at least ten feet from the ground when he glanced back and saw the monkey coming. He made no sound; simply took one flying leap, struck the earth with a thump, and was gone.

For a moment Petie gazed after it as if he would pursue; he eased himself to the ground, started on as if this might really be a good plan, then wrinkled his little nose in perplexity and turned away in another direction. Finally he reached a little knoll where some half-wild hogs were spending the night.

This was a spot where the owner of the hogs had corn placed occasionally, so that they might form the habit of coming here. Then when killing time came they were easy to locate. Of this Petie was unaware, but he did know that here was a large company of live animals. He preferred a human being for companion, but any sort of life was preferable to nothing. So he sprang into the midst of the sleepers.

With a loud "Woof!" an old sow threw him at least fifteen feet. And he was trampled upon in the stampede that followed. Half a minute later there was not a hog in sight.

The monkey had no way of knowing why he was thus shunned. Thought of how he might appear in the eyes of the swamp animals was not his. He did not know of the man-scent yet clinging to him; that this was something the swamp hogs feared almost as much as did the raccoon and mink. He did not know that they would not approach the feeding place until long after the person bringing the corn had departed, and that even after being baited there they could be secured only through stealth; that they had to be shot down from a distance.

This was not Petie's affair; he only knew that he was lonely and that he must have companionship. And the swamp was cold, damp. Never before had the monkey been so uncomfortable; he shivered and pulled the little red coat nearer his body.

For some strange reason he held onto the little tin cup—that cup into which so many pennies and nickels had dropped—and he still had it when he finally curled up in a hollow log and slept.

It was early afternoon when he again came forth. This time he traveled west until he reached the river and as he peered out across the muddy stream little squeals of gladness came to his lips.

A boy, perhaps fifteen years old, was paddling a skiff toward him. By his side was a shotgun; he was out for squirrels.

As soon as the skiff reached the bank, the boy jumped ashore, grabbed a light chain and started to fasten his craft to a tree.

It was then that he heard a little squeal, looked up and saw something flaming red in a frame of dark and uninviting undergrowth and shadow—two gleaming eyes.

With one loud yell that lad regained his boat; he had always believed there were things in that swamp about which people knew but little. And as the skiff shot out into the stream he grabbed his gun and turned loose both barrels in the general direction of the monster he had long expected—and had at last found.

The double load tore harmlessly through the leaves twenty feet or more above Petie's head, but it was the explosion that frightened. He gave a single wild scream of terror, the little red cap dropped from his head, the tin cup fell and went rolling and rattling down the bank into the water.

That one scream was all that was required to send the skiff leaping downstream and around a curve—out of sight. The hunter had departed. He had had more than a sufficiency of the swamp for one afternoon. And for days thereafter he endeavored, vainly, to make his friends believe the wild story of his hand-to-hand struggle with a red-bodied, saucer-eyed demon that, when he found he was escaping, threw missiles until he was in midstream. Unfortunately for Petie, the boy lived in an opposite direction from the town from which he had wandered. His story did not come to Tony.

When the boy had disappeared and Petie had, after a manner, got over his fright from the deafening roar of the gun, the monkey wandered away from the river. But his tin cup was hopelessly lost, and he didn't seem to remember his cap.

An hour later he attempted to make friends with a lone wild boar. This old fellow was ill-natured, an enemy to all living things—afraid of nothing. So, for the first time since coming to the swamp, Petite found a creature which, instead of running from him, ran at him. And there was no mistaking the boar's charge.

In his dash through a maze of ripping and tearing brier-vines Petie lost his green trousers, and when he gained the safety of a water oak and peered down at the raging boar underneath, all that remained of his proud raiment was an ill-used scarlet coat.

He shrieked at the boar, perhaps in an effort to drive him away, danced about on the branch which held him, waved his little hands; but all this appeared to do no good. And finally Petie became quiet. After a while the boar departed.

That night came a storm and the little monkey lay huddled up in a hollow sweet-gum, listening to the wind roaring through the tree tops; to the occasional crashing fall of a swamp monarch; heard the thunder's roar; flinched at the lightning's flash.

For two days the storm held and all that time he remained, half starved, in the sweet-gum. But finally the skies cleared and he again crept forth.

The weather was cold now—the first unpleasant days of late autumn and early winter had arrived, and Petie was sadly uncomfortable. He squealed his displeasure as he trotted along over the ground, or jumped about in the trees. Often he swung from his tail, thrashed about with his legs to warm himself.

Finally, in the effort to escape the chilling blasts, he sought the canebrake. There he was a trifle more comfortable; and there he found a young deer that had sought protection from the wind. The monkey was alongside the deer before the fleet-footed one was aware of his presence. Then there was one wild snort, a white tail flashing in the air, canes crashing; and Petie was alone.

A QUEER little noise that sounded suspiciously human burst from his throat. Petie was very near the end of things. The swamp was too much for him. Of the cold, he could stand but little; the dampness was killing; food was hard to obtain, and worst of all was the loneliness. All his life Petie had been with people. He had never known the wild. Next to the companionship of man he craved that of any living creature, and none would associate with him. Even the one human encountered had pointed a terrible thunder-making stick in his direction and with the thunder had come whistling things that tore twigs from trees; things that Petie seemed, instinctively, to know spelled death. His was indeed a sad plight. Two or three days more of hardship, exposure and loneliness and life would depart. A little red-coated, broken-hearted body would sink to the earth never again to rise.

He could find no suitable food in the canebrake, and left it. Other parts of the swamp were colder and more uncomfortable but he had no desire to starve.

He circled a marsh, trotted around a scum-covered pond, reached higher ground. And then, like a flash, the little monkey halted, cocked his head to one side and listened; a queer little grin crept over his hunger-pinched face.

He was hearing a sound that pleased; a sound that was familiar: a full-throated voice raised in song. Petie crept very softly to a water oak, peered around it, waited, then, like a shot, was up it—lying flat on a branch.

SIXTY seconds later he dropped—and landed on the shoulders of Hezekiah Seals, very colored and very reluctantly engaged in carrying a bag of corn to the knoll where Petie had routed the hogs.

This was one job that Hezekiah had never liked. He cared but little for the swamp and it was only because his boss insisted most strenuously that he fed the hogs. And it had been as much for his own reassurance as for the natural love of his race for music that his voice had been raised in song.

His voice had been raised in song. The moment Petie landed on his shoulders it was lowered—decidedly so. The last note came to an abrupt halt. The bag of corn dropped to the ground.

Startled eyes rolled, gazed deep into the sparkling orbs of Petie, took in the scarlet coat. What Hezekiah saw there was death, devils, ghosts, graveyards—all the evil of earth, air and sea rolled into one and perched on his shoulders. He was one of the very few who had not heard of the lost monkey, and if he had it is very probable that he wouldn't have remembered. There were other matters more pressing.

He opened his lips; his tongue made a desperate effort to do its duty, but no sound came forth. His knees knocked together. Then Petie gave a glad, friendly little chirrup—a sort of greeting; but he was holding on with a vise-like grip. He was not going to be left alone any more. The boy had run; he had given Hezekiah no chance to flee—without him. This was a human being—he and Petie were going to remain together.

At that chirrup Hezekiah whirled. No longer were his knees paying friendly calls; his feet were engaged in an important problem in arithmetic—putting down and carrying. A few seconds before he had been penetrating the swamp. He was now unpenetrating.

Hezekiah made the first half-mile in nothing flat; the second in a little better. Then he stumbled and fell; lay there for a brief instant. The monkey moved. So did Hezekiah.

He covered the next hundred yards on hands and knees, and then appeared to realize that he could make better time in the proper position.

Once he tried to tear the monkey from his neck, and Petie caught—and attempted to hold—his hand. Petie didn't succeed.

Hezekiah's breath was coming rapidly now but he was covering about eight feet at a jump and with each jump there came a yell. Occasionally Petie made a short, happy comment; this didn't seem to reassure the runner; on the contrary it served as a sort of spur. And Hezekiah was a steed that needed no spur.

Hezekiah resumed his frantic efforts to tear the terror from his shoulder. He might as well have tried to uproot one of the trees about him. Petie was there to stay.

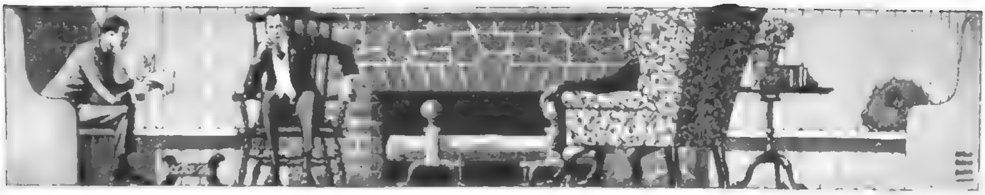
Hezekiah left the last slough behind; he didn't trouble to go around the final shallow pond. He cleared the low-lying pine woods between the swamp and village like a deer with the dogs in hot pursuit, and fell breathless—and speechless—in front of the little town's general store.

For a brief instant Petie sat on the black man's head. Then a short, quick cry of gladness burst from his throat. He sprang through the air and landed—in Tony's arms; in the arms of his master who had once again returned to the village, hoping to find news of his lost companion.

While friendly hands pulled Hezekiah to his feet and friendly voices assured him that it wasn't the devil he had brought from the swamp, his voice gradually returned and he told—as best he could—the story of the wild dash through the shadows.

As Hezekiah talked Petie snuggled comfortably and happily in Tony's arms. The terrors of the swamp lay in the past. Petie was again with one who understood; with one who would not flee.

A contented little sigh issued from the monkey's throat. He nestled nearer the one he loved. Tony was wonderful—and with him forever after would Petie stay.



Everybody's Chimney Corner

Where Reader, Author and Editor Gather to Talk Things Over

AMONG the interesting experiences that have fallen to the lot of Joseph Husband, writer of "The Citadel" which begins in this issue, is the honor of having been interviewed by the famous author of "The Brook Kerith"—George Moore. A Chicago newspaper tells of it as follows:

> Some years ago George Moore received a letter postmarked Winnetka, Illinois. It was from Mr. Husband, and asked questions. Mr. Moore answered them; but the author seems to have been most impressed by the beauty of Mr. Husband's handwriting—"like Poe's or Mallarmé's, natural and free from affectation." He was led, in compliment, to say that a transcription of "The Brook Kerith," on vellum, by Mr. Husband, would be a prize for any man's library. Then the author worried lest the Winnetkan should take him seriously, and actually attempt the arduous task, but Mr. Husband, acknowledging Mr. Moore's letter, ignored the compliment and established himself in the relieved mind of its writer as "a clever man" who knew how to distinguish "the casual from the pertinent." Mr. Husband also sent Mr. Moore a slim book, "A Year in a Coal Mine," relating his experience as a toiler in an Indiana mine, an exploit in which he engaged after graduating from Harvard. Why should a Harvard man go to work in a mine? Mr. Moore's curiosity was piqued. Came a day, after the war was over, in which Mr. Husband served as seaman and ensign in the United States Navy, when the Winnetkan found himself in London and, apprising Mr. Moore of the fact, was invited to tea at 121 Ebury Street.

THE conversation that then ensued, to be followed by more on a second visit, covers pages in an article in London *Mercury*. To be sure, most of the talk came from the lips of Mr. Moore, who is an excellent reporter of his own brilliant comment on life and art and education, but like the fly embalmed in amber, we find the personality of "the young stalwart" from Winnetka exquisitely preserved and displayed in the transparent substance of genius. It is hinted this article is to be a chapter in a book, "Conversations in Ebury Street," which Mr. Moore will later give us. Thus Mr. Husband and Winnetka are destined for enduring fame on all the best literary shelves. Of Mr. Husband, the voice of Winnetka, we learn that he was born in Rochester, New York, July 25, 1885; that he became a coal miner in order to get nearer life than he had got at Harvard; that his business drags him from bed at seven in the morning—he is not mining now; that he loves to sleep and found charm in London because he could lie in bed until nine.

OSCAR SCHISGALL, the author of "Onions" (page 133), was born twenty-two years ago in Belgium. He writes:

> For five years I struggled to master French, Flemish, Dutch and German; but no sooner had I gripped the rudiments of these languages than I found myself suddenly transported to the land of

Joseph Husband, author of the new serial, "The Citadel" (page 9), a romance laid in a dramatic period of Haitian history.

the free, as it was then called. And there was nothing to do but forget my previous studies and pounce upon English. Since that time I have lived in New York, and though I have in these seventeen years acquired as much as possible from city grammar schools, high schools and colleges, I have not been able to shake off entirely a hazy knowledge of the languages I once dropped glibly from youthful lips. So much for the chronology of my life. As a traveler, I have led a most adventurous career; once I visited Philadelphia and Atlantic City, both during the same week-end. At another time I saw Jersey City. More interesting than these was my epochal journey to Albany. But, regardless of these globe trottings, I have decided to wander farther. In a few months, God and my bank willing, I shall sail forth on a lazy tour of Europe.

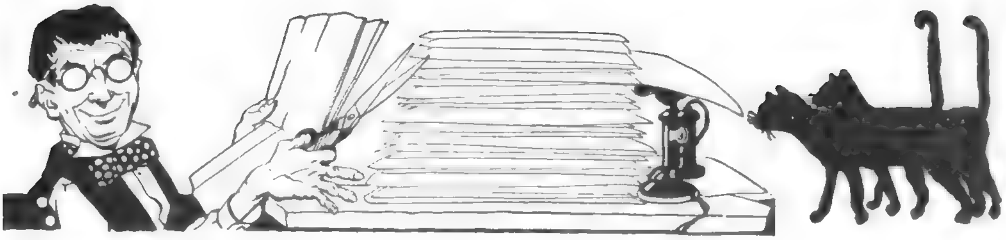
MY LITERARY life began when I was fifteen. At that age I saw a movie in which the eminent actor, Carlyle Blackwell, was an author. He wore a tieless, open-collared shirt; he owned a yacht, and a sprawling, white home. And he never seemed to work. That, I decided, was my idea of real existence. So I determined to write. At sixteen I began a collection of three hundred rejection slips. Of course, I did other work for ready cash during college vacations, for my literary earnings could not pay even for the paper I used. I was a salesman, selling, in the order named, sand, clocks, novelties, and slicing machines. At twenty-one I sold my first story. And since then, in a year and a half, I have disposed of about fifty tales—short stories, novelettes, and a novel. That is all. I expect to have a colorful biography some day.

Elizabeth Bowen of England makes her bow in Everybody's with an unusual piece of character study ("Making Arrangements," page 45).

ELIZABETH BOWEN ("Making Arrangements," page 45) says that we should pay more attention to what she calls "the technique of living."

I do not think [she writes under the title "A Reason for Writing"] that there is anything more dangerous to the proper enjoyment of life than this impulse which besets us to rationalize away our impulses cui bono—after all, why do anything? Why read, why dance, why seek good company, why forgather for meals? We may even extinguish the flow of self-justification with which we draw in our chairs to the table with the knowledge that we are only to incumber our digestive systems with a superfluity of foods when we might absorb beef tabloids out of little tins. We are becoming too close-fisted with our time. One would think each day we're a truck to be pushed off heavily laden with our practical achievements down the line into eternity. We are too much preoccupied with the *matter* of life. In a world still—though temporarily—dominated by the natural forces and the elements, we still are forced to countenance irrationality. The weather never does what is expected of it; the force of gravity has not yet been perfectly overcome; and the wrong people perpetually fall in love. I think that we should give more of our energy and interest to the *technique* of living, and that manner should take preëminence over matter in our lives. "This is wisdom, to live the greatest number of good days" (and it is quite right that I should have forgotten who said it). One grants that individual sense-experience cannot be made the whole criterion of values, but all the same one should regard this proposition of *living* in a spirit artistic or scientific rather than commercial.

TO PARTICULARIZE one's style of living and bring it to its best is our métier all the time that we are so miraculously alive; it is this that the artists of today are longing for us to discover. In their despair, fanatics among them give us purple haystacks, cubist prose, and unintelligible poetry. It is a mistake to imagine that any artist has a doctrine; every picture, poem or short story is the merest friendly challenge: "This is how *I* am living. Now how do you live?" Never accept anything an artist tells you with docility; all he intended was that you should arrive for yourself at an equal certainty from which to contradict him. This is my reason for writing, and I believe it to be everybody's, to present my one out of a thousand million ways of living for the interest of comparison with all your others. To talk about creative art is nonsense: art is nothing but a record. The artist is only a better or worse artist in so far as *he* is accurately or inaccurately his own reporter. *One* may be so much enriched by sensitiveness to every personal contact; and I believe that there is a kind of individualism which does make for kindliness and humility. After all, one is simply Oneself, not Everybody. One is surrounded by other creatures in their millions, also miraculously living. Are they all as interesting as I am? I will go and find



Prose *and* Worse, *by* Gridley Adams

DO YOU BELIEVE IN SIGNS?

In Brooklyn undertaker's window: "*No Connection With Any Other Place.*" (J. R.) (You evidently have to choose your own route.)
In Springfield, Ohio: "*Odd F. Ott.*"
On hill near West Bend, Wis.: "*Go Slow Down; Give Plenty of Room to Upcomers.*"
In Clinton, Conn.: "*CHICKEN A'LAKING.*"
In New Haven, Conn.: "*Z. Karess.*" (*The "y" is silent, as in smack.*)
In Chicago: "*Itsy Gamm.*"
In Peoria, Ill.: "*Gussie Gusselschnopes.*"
In Aurora, Ill.: "*Don't Buy Your Thermometers Now, They'll Be Lower Next Winter.*"
In Chicago: *Dog License No.* 40,520 *issued to "A. Kurr.*"
In window of Sacramento store: "*Scratch* $2.55." (Z. P. H.)
(Not a cheap town in which to catch the itch.)

(*Bureau Co., Ill., Republican*)

Both men were pinned under the car and were nearly drowned. They were saved by Dewey Souser, who was close at hand when the accident happened.

Liquids hold no fear for Dewey.

(*Mendon, Ill., Globe-Leader*)

FIRE TRUCK NOTICE

The Fire Truck is now stored in the Ford Garage. Those who do not have a key should go to the east window of the Bank and the Telephone Operator will lower a key tied to a string and card, to them, from the office window. The key will unlock first door on west side. Please return key to the telephone office immediately. CHAS. CALKINS, president.

Better still, write the operator a letter, enclosing stamped envelope for reply.

(*Dallas News*)

WANTED—A large two-story house in good repair, preferably in East Dallas. Must be very near car line. To be occupied by minister and former college president's wife. Box 7-N, News.

What a mild winter we've been having!

(*In Breathitt County, Ky.*)

Notice This January 19, 1923

I notify no one to open these dores or to cut eny tember or eben a riden switch on this place untell this dispute is settled a corden to laww

For I have got a generl warnteed deed for hit if enyman or eny one opens these dores I will force the law on them MART SIZEMORE

Well, he needn't sesanymore to me!

(*Fort Scott, Kan., Lantern*)

An Apology to Mr. Murphy.

"We hear that one Murphy has lodged complaint with the county attorney alleging injury to his reputation because of an article on chicken thievery recently appearing in this paper. We also hear that if an apology be made, clearing him from the imputation, the matter will be dropped. We wish to meet everybody half way. We never saw Murphy stealing chickens; we go to bed too early for that. We doubt if anybody ever caught him at it—in the daytime. And, we may ask, what would our hotels and restaurants do without Murphy? When the market is shy of chickens, they have but to call up Murphy and before dawn next day the desired number of chickens, all peeled, are at the door. Always peeled. Yet Murphy does not raise chickens; that is, in the usual way. There is often a big smoke redolent of feathers issuing from his chimney; but maybe he is long on feather beds and short on fuel. So, if pinned down to facts, we do not say Murphy steals chickens; but every time we see chickens we think Murphy, and every time we see Murphy we think chickens."

Just a little more of the white meat, please; there, that's enough.

(*Ad in Healdsburg, Calif.*)

Certified Milk for Babies at the Home Dairy. (H. L.)

Naturally.

(*Trinidad, Colo., Picketwire*)

MARRIED—Thomas E. Jones, Guy, N. M., and Ivalone Gripe, Valley, N. M. (MRS. E. H. D.)

Evidently, that one's enough.

Copyright, 1924, by Gridley Adams.

(Sturgis Democrat)

The dead man ran nearly half a mile in an endeavor to reach his home on the outskirts of Sturgis, but the pursuit overtook him. (G. H. W.)

Not a dead heat, evidently.

(San Antonio Express)

The plan of the Chamber of Commerce to devote a part of the $60,000 advertising fund to lure sportsmen from their liars is working out nice. (G. K.)

It just can't be done.

(Springfield, Mo., Leader)

FOR SALE OR TRADE

BABY BUGGY for sale, baby, in good condition. Phone 5030. (A. F. H.)

I got a jack-knife, two marbles and a bean-shooter.

(Sign on church in Waterloo, N. Y.)

"Kind words can never die." There will be no service in this church next Sunday. (V. P. M'H.)

Boy, see what condition my golf sticks are in.

(Panama City, Fla., Pilot)

The many friends of James Elliott were very glad to see him out for a short auto ride on Monday. Other than being paralyzed on the left side and almost helpless, he is looking well and is in a cheerful frame of mind. (MISS C. M.)

Darned good man for the shape he's in.

(An Ohio weekly)

It is common knowledge that one street car company is still carrying on its books dead horses and mules that have been dead twenty years or more. There is no incentive to operate these properties on an economical basis.

Whew! I should say NOT!

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THESE PICTURES?

"If I only had my clubs along," remarked the visiting golfer, "my score would have been fifteen strokes better."

"One reason why I admire him so," said the young lady, "is that he doesn't throw away his money on girls."

"John hasn't a touch of his old indigestion," said the bride, "since he began eating my biscuits."

"I have worn this watch for three years," said she, "and it keeps perfect time yet."

"Their picnic was planned for Sunday and not a cloud appeared in the sky."

"Let's turn the car here and go back," said the flapper; "I promised mamma I'd be home by nine o'clock."

Said the homely girl: "I read some of the advertisements, but I never read those concerning beauty secrets."

"I tried to interview the senator on his return from Europe," explained the reporter, "but he had nothing to say about European affairs."

"One fine thing about my children," boasted the mother, "is that they never let the screen doors slam."

"Yes," admitted the husband, "you are getting a little fat, but you're just as attractive to me as you ever were."

(Ohio State Journal)

Mr. and Mrs. Fred White, Louden Avenue, announce the birth of Mr. and Mrs. Corwin Mendenhall.

Well, 'twas bound to leak out, anyway.

(Falmouth, Ky., Outlook)

Three old-maid sisters live on a farm near Wickliffe, Kentucky, and they are all toothless. They own one pair of false teeth between them, and whichever one of them goes on a visit or to town to do the trading wears them.

And they probably draw cuts to see who goes to church on Sunday.

(Chicago Tribune)

The renown of the nightingale is based partly on its habit of singing as it flies aloft, delirious with emotion.

Wot a lark!

(Burger's Mills, N. Y.)

On Tuesday night Mrs. Hogan, who is boarding at Charles Young's, tried to run down Burger's store, but only made some kindling wood and bent the guard and cap on the wheel. When they started for home her husband took hold of the wheel and they reached home all right.

!!—!!!!—!!!—!!—!!!—!!!!!!

(Walworth County, Wis., Register)

Not content with having the largest family in Delavan and probably in Walworth County, William Storck has welcomed another child, a girl, born Saturday.

Old Doc's orders must be letting up a bit.

(Waverly, Iowa, Democrat)

To the Public:—This is what was discovered on the Fred Schellhorn farm by a statesman, Baldwin, a broken-up (and into pieces) still, not been in use for two or three months, to discontinue the manufacture of liquor; three-fourth pint of pure alcohol, that was specially used for medical purposes, which was strictly used by Mrs. Fred Schellhorn for sore feet and swollen ankle, and it was a great benefit to her feet. MR. FRED SCHELLHORN.

Sure; if it got down that far.

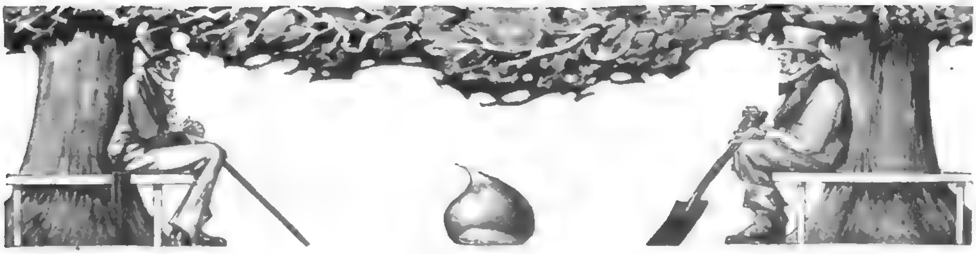
(Poughkeepsie News)

Miss Ida Mae Kumme has returned home after spending a week with her sister in New York.

(Trinidad, Colo., Picketwire)

Miss Noda Mae Igo, teacher at the Thatcher school, spent yesterday shopping with local merchants and left on No. 9 to pass the week end visiting Dawson friends. (MRS. E. H. D.)

"But I go on"—what's that, what's that?



Everybody's Chestnut Tree

Editor's Note: Though the sign is the Chestnut Tree, no story is barred by its youth. We will gladly pay for available ones. Address all manuscripts to "The Chestnut Tree," enclosing stamped addressed envelope.

THE correspondent of a large business concern had been invited out to dinner and was asked to say grace. This was an entirely new experience, but he took it valiantly.

"Dear Lord," he began, "we thank You for all Your favors of recent date. Accept our heartfelt gratitude. We trust that we may continue to merit Your confidence, and that we shall receive many more blessings from You in the future. Amen."

A SCOTTISH farmer, being elected to the school board, visited the village school and tested the intelligence of the class by the question:

"Now, boys, can any of you tell me what naething is?"

After a moment's silence a small boy in a back seat rose.

"It's what ye gi'ed me the other day for holding yer horse."

BERTIE was told that he must ask permission for certain things.

"Where does Permission live?" he inquired.

BETTY, aged four, had become very much disgusted because the new baby brother cried a great deal, and one day demanded: "Mother, where did baby brother come from?"

"Why, straight from heaven, dear. God sent him to us."

Betty looked thoughtful for a moment and then said: "Well, I wish God would come and get him again. I'm sick of him."

RUBB: I see there's only one painting of Rockefeller in existence, and that's in water-colors.

DUBB: H'm! Well, I suppose nobody's ever been able to do him in oil.

MR. IVES had just been telling his wife about a business associate whom he would like to entertain sometime at his home.

"No, sir," replied Mrs. Ives, "I certainly shall not invite him and his wife here."

"Why, my dear! Why not?" queried Mr. Ives.

"Because," explained Mrs. Ives, "I entertained her once and she never recuperated!"

HIRAM walked four miles over the mountain to call on the lady of his dreams. For a long time they sat silent on a bench by the side of her log-cabin home; but soon the moon, as moons do, had its effect and Hiram sidled closer to her and picked up her hand.

"Mary," he began, "y'know I got a good clearin' over thar an' a team an' wagon an' some hawgs an' cows, an' I cal'late on buildin' a house this fall an'—"

Here he was interrupted by Mary's mother, who had awakened.

"Mary!" she called in a loud voice. "Is that young man thar yit?"

Back came the answer, "No, ma, but he's gittin' thar."

VISITOR: What small girls you employ in your dairy!

FOREMAN: Yes, those are our condensed milk maids.

"**I** HEAR you had quite a spell, Aunt Jemima."

"Yes, honey. Dey done tuk me to de horsepital and guv me a epidemic interjection."

CAUGHLIN: When Cheaplight bought that bargain car with the poor tires he invited all the neighbors for a long celebration trip.

LAUGHLIN: Yes, they had a regular blow-out.

TWO gentlemen of color were discussing the plight of a lodge brother who had been sentenced to thirty days in the workhouse for stealing watermelons.

"Was he guilty?" queried Mose.

"He mos' certainly was guilty as indicated," answered the more educated Rastus, "foh I seen Mistah Cap'n Saunders ketch him wid dat melon right submerged undah his a'm."

"Gwan!" returned Mose. "Sho' nuff? And what did Mistah Cap'n say to him?"

"The rema'ks addressed by the Cap'n," answered Rastus, "was pu'ly cursory, pu'ly cursory."

IN MAJOR BEAUFORT'S enforced absence, his old black servant Lem was under instructions to welcome the expected guest.

When Mr. Allen was settled comfortably before the library fire, Lem asked as a matter of course, "Can I mix you a highball, sah?"

"No, thanks, Lem."

"Take it straight, sah?"

"No, thanks."

This guest was going to be hard to entertain. Bringing a humidor, Lem urged:

"Try one of Mistah Jim's cigars, sah. They's ve'y fine!"

"No, Lem. Thanks just the same, but I don't smoke."

Lem looked puzzled; then: "Beg yo' pa'don, sah, but would you min' tellin' me what you *does* to make you smell like a gen'leman?"

BUSINESS MAN (to office boy): I never saw such a stupid boy as you are. The lad that was here before you was worth twice as much as you are.

OFFICE BOY: Did he get it?

A SHOEMAKER in a Nova Scotia town had considerable trouble in getting his customers to claim and pay for their boots and shoes, and in order to hurry up matters put the following sign in his window:

"All boots and shoes left at this shop and not claimed within thirty days will be soled."

A WOMAN went to the bank and asked for a new check-book.

"I've lost the one you gave me yesterday," she said. "But it doesn't matter. I took the precaution of signing all the checks as soon as I got it, so of course it won't be any use to any one else."

"**THE** landlady threw my best coat and trousers out into the street."

"What did you do?"

"I followed suit."

THE young son of a Stanford University professor was given a wonderful mechanical toy which created quite a juvenile furore on the campus. The little fellow was urged by his parents not to be selfish but to be patient and let his friends enjoy it, too. One day the report came that he had struck one of his playmates. When questioned he said:

"Well, daddy, I tried to be patient, but the zoölogical moment came and I hit him."

"**BANG**!" went the rifles at the maneuvers.

"Oo-oo!" screamed the pretty girl—a nice, decorous, surprised little scream. She stepped backward into the surprised arms of a young man.

"Oh!" said she, blushing. "I was frightened by the rifles. I beg your pardon."

"Not at all," said the young man. "Let's go over and watch the artillery."

THE young man who was accustomed to having an early breakfast every morning was absent one morning, having gone to see his wife off on an early train.

Returning to the house some time later he said to the cook:

"Well, Jane, I have no spouse this morning."

"'Tain't my fault, suh," replied Jane indignantly. "I sho cooked it fo' yuh. But you jes' wouldn't come eat it."

I Tell You
This Free Book Will Show You The Way to Amazing Salary Increases

Modern Salesmanship

I only ask that you risk two cents on the strength of my word that the contents of this amazing book will show you the way to a prosperity that you never dreamed possible, in a fascinating field that you never thought of entering. This book is now free. Read my offer.

By J. E. GREENSLADE

First, let me ask you two questions. One: Do you consider that you are as intelligent as the average mail-clerk, farmhand, office clerk, mechanic, or bookkeeper?

Second: If you suddenly found yourself with all the money you needed to spend, wearing the best clothes, living in a fine neighborhood, driving a good car and belonging to the best clubs—but having to make good in a job that paid $10,000 a year, would it scare you? There are men to whom $10,000 a year is so much that the idea of earning it themselves never occurs to them. They will always be in routine jobs at low pay. Their dreams will never come true. But yours will if you will absorb what I am going to tell you.

Now, in one quick step you can enter the field where opportunities in your favor are ten to one—the Selling field. You know that Salesmen top the list of money-makers—that the salesman is his own boss—that his work is fascinating, interesting and highly profitable! But the thing you doubt is your own ability. All right, but you can become a first-class, money-making salesman in an amazingly easy way.

Proof That Salesmen Are Made —Not "Born"

The story of six men who once thought salesmen were "born," who did not believe they were "cut out for selling," is on this page.

Thousands of men like these six men who formerly thought salesmen were "born," are now enjoying magnificent earnings in the selling field. They were bookkeepers, mechanics, farmers, clerks—even doctors, lawyers and ministers—but in a few months after writing to the National Salesmen's Training Association they were out in the field selling—and making more money than they had ever hoped to make.

Sounds remarkable, doesn't it? Yet there is nothing remarkable about it. Salesmanship is governed by rules and laws. There is a certain way of saying and doing things, a certain way of approaching a prospect to get his undivided attention, certain ways to overcome objections, batter down prejudice, and overcome competition.

Just as you learned the alphabet, so you can learn salesmanship. And through the NATIONAL DEMONSTRATION METHOD—an exclusive feature of the N. S. T. A. System of Salesmanship Training—you gain actual experience while studying.

Years of Selling Experience in a Few Weeks

The N. S. T. A. System of Salesmanship Training and Employment Service will enable you to quickly step into the ranks of successful salesmen—will give you a big advantage over those who lack this training. It will enable you to jump from small pay to a real man's income.

Remarkable Book, "Modern Salesmanship," Sent Free

With my compliments I want to send you a most remarkable book, "Modern Salesmanship."

It will show you how you can easily become a Master Salesman—a big money-maker—how the N. S. T. A. System of Salesmanship Training will give you years of selling experience in a few weeks; how our FREE Employment Service will help select and secure a good selling position when you are qualified and ready. And it will give you success stories of former routine workers who are now earning amazing salaries as salesmen. Mail the coupon today. It may be the turning point in your life.

National Salesmen's Training Association
53 W. Jackson Blvd. Dept. 74-G Chicago, Ill.

READ!

$9,000 First Year

Ellis Sumner Cook, 20 E. Jackson Blvd., Chicago, left a $25 a week job and last year made $9,000!

$100 a Month to $100 a Week in Only 3 Months

H. D. Miller, another Chicago boy, was making $100 a month as stenographer in July, 1922. In September, 3 months later, he was making $100 a week as a salesman.

$150 to $500 a Month

W. P. Clenny, of Kansas City, Mo., stepped from a $150 a month clerkship into a selling job at $500 a month. He is making $850 a month now.

$6,500 a Year

M. V. Stephens, of Albany, Ky., was making $25 a week. He took up this training and now makes five times that much.

Small Pay to Big Earnings

J. H. Cash, of Atlanta, Ga., exchanged his $75 a month job for one which pays him $500 a month.

Now Sales Manager at $10,000 a Year

O. H. Malfroot, of Boston, Mass., stepped into a $10,000 position as a SALES MANAGER—so thorough is this training. All these successes are due to this easy, fascinating and rapid way to master certain invincible secrets of selling.

EMPLOYERS

are invited to write to the Employment Dept. of the N. S. T. A. We can put you in touch with just the men you need. No charge for this service to you or our members. Employers are also cordially invited to request details about the N. S. T. A. Group Plan of instruction for entire sales forces. Synopsis and charts sent without obligation.

National Salesmen's Training Association
Dept. 74-G, Chicago, Ill.

I simply want to see the facts. Send me free your book, "Modern Salesmanship," and Proof that I can become a Master Salesman.

Name ....

Address ....

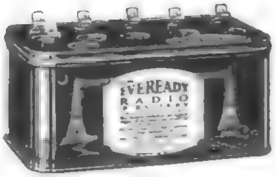
City .... State ....

Age .... Occupation ....

"THE AIR IS FULL OF THINGS YOU SHOULDN'T MISS"

Your "B" Battery is the life of your Radio Set

THE broadcasting stations are transmitting wonderful programs for enjoyment in your home. Here a wonderful aria is being sung by a famous soprano—there a radio drama is being given. Here is a play-by-play report of some important athletic event—there an address of national importance. The successful reproduction of all these is absolutely dependent upon the quality of your "B" Battery, for without its silent, energizing current your set would be lifeless—mute.



Eveready "B" Battery No. 766
22½ volts. Six Fahnestock Spring Clip Terminals, giving variable voltage from 16½ to 22½ volts, in 1½-volt steps. Length, 6⅝ in.; width, 4⅜ in.; height, 3 3/16 in. Weight, 5 lbs.

The makers of Eveready "B" Batteries have a thirty-year background of experience in battery making. They have expended millions in money and time, in men and methods, in machinery and laboratory research, to bring the dry cell to its highest point of efficiency. They have pioneered and assisted in the march of radio, and out of this broad experience have contributed that marvel of vitality and endurance—the Eveready "B" Battery—that your radio set may pulsate with life and bring forth thrilling speech and rippling music.

Be good to your set. Equip it with Eveready "B" Batteries that will serve and endure. Use Eveready Batteries throughout your set, for there is an Eveready Radio Battery for every radio use—the right battery by test and proof. Insist on Eveready Batteries—they last longer.

Manufactured and guaranteed by

NATIONAL CARBON COMPANY, Inc.
Headquarters for Radio Battery Information
New York San Francisco
Canadian National Carbon Co., Limited, Toronto, Ontario

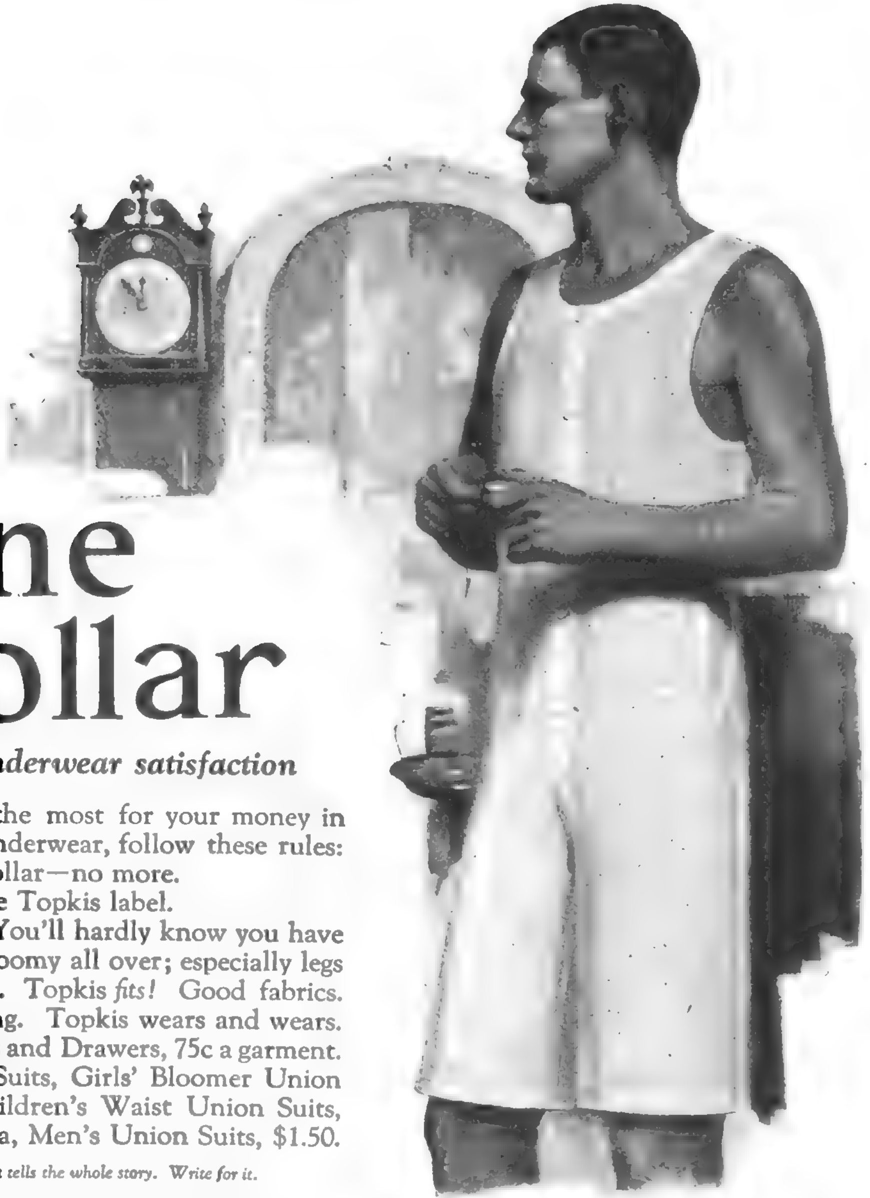
Informative and money-saving booklets on radio batteries sent free on request. If you have any questions regarding radio batteries, write to Radio Division, G. C. Furness, Manager, National Carbon Company, Inc., 208 Orton Street, Long Island City, N. Y.

EVEREADY
Radio Batteries
—they last longer

EVERYBODY'S
June, 1924

Published monthly by The Ridgway Company at Spring and Macdougal Sts., New York, N. Y. Yearly subscription $2.50 in advance; single copy 25 cents. Entered as second-class matter Aug. 16, 1899, at the Post-Office at New York, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1879. Entered as second class matter at the Post-Office Department, Ottawa, Canada.

Volume L
Number 6



One Dollar

—for underwear satisfaction

TO GET the most for your money in athletic underwear, follow these rules:

Pay One Dollar—no more.

Look for the Topkis label.

Comfort? You'll hardly know you have Topkis on! Roomy all over; especially legs and arm-holes. Topkis *fits!* Good fabrics. Sound tailoring. Topkis wears and wears.

Men's Shirts and Drawers, 75c a garment. Boys' Union Suits, Girls' Bloomer Union Suits, and Children's Waist Union Suits, 75c. In Canada, Men's Union Suits, $1.50.

Free Booklet tells the whole story. Write for it.

TOPKIS BROTHERS COMPANY, Wilmington, Del.
General Sales Offices: 350 Broadway, New York City

Ask for TOPKIS Underwear. *Look for the TOPKIS label.*

Buy Topkis by the Box—Six union suits for $6. Some men pay as much for three suits—but they don't know Topkis.

TOPKIS

Athletic Underwear

No Day Like Another

in this summer-land of strange sights and rare fun

DO you know a vacation land where the days bring endless variety—where no day's activities are like those of the next? Here is such a section. In Southern California, each hour provides new sights and new activities. Complete change—that's what makes a real vacation.

Days are made for sport, nights for sleep. Note the average mean temperatures for forty-seven years as recorded by the U. S. Weather Bureau in a central city of this district:

47 Junes	66 deg.	47 Augusts	71 deg.
47 Julys	70 deg.	47 Septembers	69 deg.

It's rainless, too, in summer. You spend your waking hours in outdoor sports. Fish for hundred pound fighters or for game trout. Swim in the white-topped breakers. Play golf or tennis. Ride, hike, camp, sail, or just loaf.

4,000 miles of paved boulevards lead to a thousand wonders in this land. Strange sights, rare beauties like those you've heard about in foreign lands. There's a crescent beach, encircled by mountains, at Santa Barbara. There's a desert like Sahara. Great groves of oranges, are strange and interesting. Giant trees, vast wildernesses, lofty peaks, snow-clad in June—each holds untold charm.

Palm lined drives, gardens of gorgeous blossoms, mile high mountain lakes, old Spanish missions—all new and unusual. This summer-land is unlike any place you've ever known. Come now and see it. You'll find your greatest vacation in this section. And its cost will be just what you choose to make it.

Special summer round-trip railroad rates, from May to October, enable you to make the complete journey for little more than one way usually costs. So you can come. Plan now for your finest summer.

Ask your railroad ticket agent or send the coupon for additional information. Then spend two weeks or two months in this wonderland and return with new vigor, new energy, rested and eager for another year's activities.

All-Year Club of Southern California

Nearby sources of raw material, an unmatched year-round climate, the cheapest hydro-electric power in America, and contented, happy workers have brought an amazing industrial growth here with untold opportunities for manufacturers and investors.

ALL-YEAR CLUB OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA,
Dept. 306, 2601 S. Figueroa St.,
Los Angeles, California.

Please send me full information about the summer and year-round vacation possibilities in Southern California.

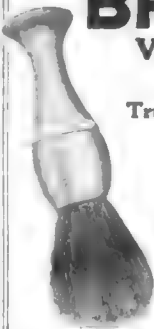
NAME...

ADDRESS...

....

....

WHITING-ADAMS BRUSHES



Vulcan Rubber Cemented Shaving Brushes

True friends of shavers and razors. Easy shaves and smooth skins. Bristles, hair and handles never part company. Held with pure rubber vulcanized as hard as granite.

Sterilized completely, sealed singly in packages. Infection cannot come from them.

Send for Illustrated Literature

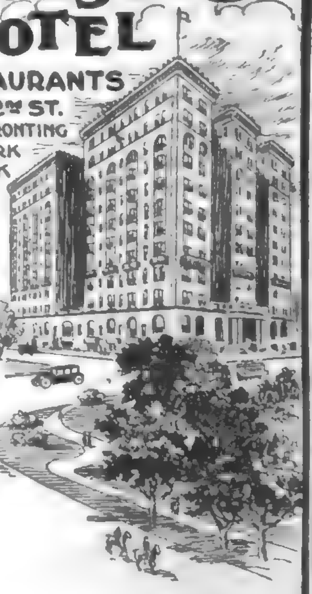
JOHN L. WHITING-J. J. ADAMS CO.
Boston, U. S. A.

Brush Manufacturers for Over 114 Years and the Largest in the World

93

MAJESTIC HOTEL

AND RESTAURANTS
2 WEST 72nd ST.
ENTIRE BLOCK FRONTING
CENTRAL PARK
NEW YORK



Location
a Dream
of Beauty
a Reality of
Convenience

Copeland Townsend
President

Edouard Panchard
Vice-President

What Do *You* Call an Opportunity?

IN MY LIFETIME I have heard many men speak of opportunity. I have read some very fine definitions of this wonder-word. It has been the subject of many splendid speeches; authors have written abundantly about it in prose and poetry.

You have said, "I wish I had an opportunity."

But I am wondering what you call an opportunity.

Do you—as so many do—mistakenly associate it with "good fortune" or "good luck"?

Suppose tomorrow you heard of a $10,000 position seeking a man. Could you fill it? If so, it would be an opportunity. If not, it would be no opportunity at all so far as you are concerned. It would be merely a bit of information from which you could not benefit.

Opportunity, I believe, is usually a recognition of worth.

The biggest opportunity that can ever come to you will never be any bigger than your preparation—your worth-whileness.

If you are not worth considering, Opportunity won't give you a thought.

The biggest job of all the big jobs open and filled in the last twenty-four hours would have been an opportunity for you—

—*if* you had been prepared.

And I am not one who believes that Opportunity knocks but once.

The hundreds of opportunities which are here to-day will come again tomorrow—

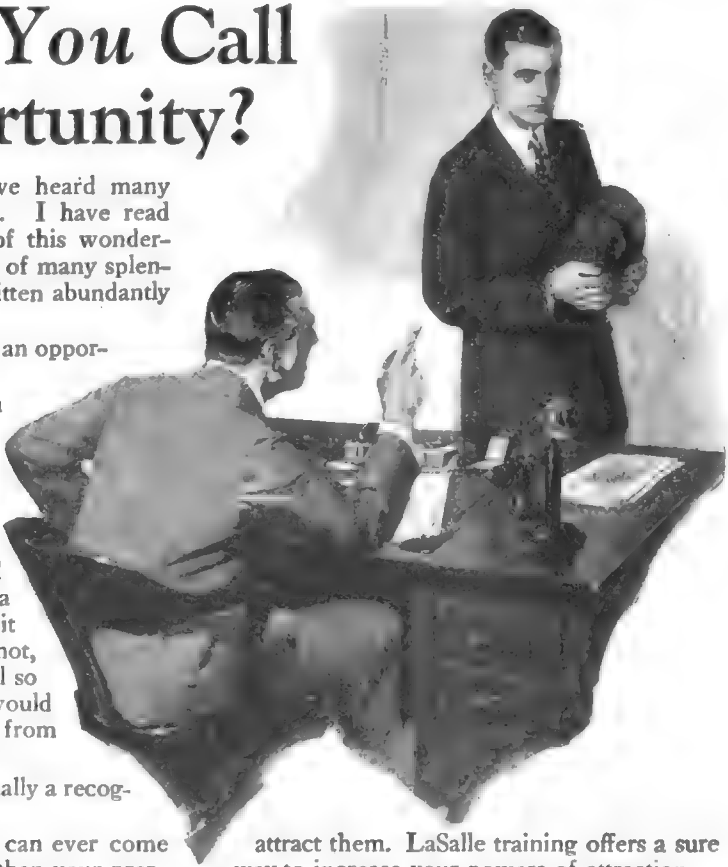
—if you are *prepared.*

But you can be sure they will never be found on the door-steps of worthless prospects—men who are not ready.

Opportunity seeks and finds only those who have paid the price of preparation. She does not pick men as you pick a number from a lottery; neither does she cover up what she has to offer. Her gifts are an open book—yours from which to choose.

Pick the thing you want, and get ready for it. Opportunities do not come except as you attract them. LaSalle training offers a sure way to increase your powers of attraction.

Just bear in mind that the biggest opportunity that can ever come to you will never be greater than your *preparation.*

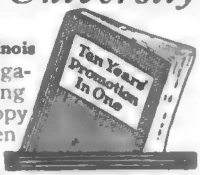


J. G. Chapline
President
LaSalle Extension University

—INQUIRY COUPON—

LaSalle Extension University
The Largest Business Training Institution in the World
Dept. 643-R Chicago, Illinois

Gentlemen: Send without obligation to me information regarding course indicated below, also copy of your interesting book, "Ten Years' Promotion in One."


Ten Years' Promotion In One

☐ Business Management
☐ Modern Salesmanship
☐ Higher Accountancy
☐ Law—Degree of LL.B.
☐ Traffic Management
☐ Railway Station Management
☐ Commercial Law
☐ Industrial Management Efficiency
☐ Banking and Finance
☐ Modern Business Correspondence and Practice
☐ Modern Foremanship and Production Methods
☐ Personnel and Employment Management
☐ Expert Bookkeeping
☐ Business English
☐ Commercial Spanish
☐ Effective Speaking
☐ C. P. A. Coaching

Name..

Present Position..

Address..

Hupmobile

Brinnell Mark

Safety

Hupmobile provides safety by means of fine materials and determinative tests. The parts shown here — steering knuckle, steering arm, and front axle — are of the finest material that can be used. All are drop-forged steel, double heat-treated, unusually heavy. In this group, each individual part must pass the Brinnell test, within close limits, for proper hardness of material, and bears the Brinnell mark.

Now You Can See
Why This is the Best-Value Car You Can Buy

Any Hupmobile owner would tell you that each dollar he paid for his car brought him the best and largest 100 cents worth of superior motoring it is possible to purchase.

He has learned the significance of those thorough and costly processes of manufacture that have always characterized Hupmobile methods. He knows now what real motor car values are.

What he knows through ownership, you can discover through observation.

Those "invisible costs," that have so much to do with the proverbially substantial Hupmobile qualities have now been made visible for you.

Step into the nearest Hupmobile salesroom and see the parts display.

The tickets on the parts tell in black type what they are for, how they are made, and what they are made of.

The same ticket, in red type, tells a similar story about similar parts in cars not so carefully made.

If these cars could match the Hupmobile in excellence and reliability of performance, in durability and economy of up-keep—you might then be justified in laying your money on the "red."

But wisdom says black is the safe and sane color when it comes to investing hard-earned money in an automobile.

Everybody's

NUMBER SIX JUNE, 1924 VOLUME FIFTY

If It's in Everybody's It's a Good Story

CONTENTS

A COMPLETE NOVEL

The Happy Despot REGINALD WRIGHT KAUFFMAN 101
Illustrations by O. J. GATTER

SEVEN SHORT STORIES

The Surprise Gobbler HARRIS DICKSON 33
Illustration by ROBERT A. GRAEF

Making Arrangements (See page 184) ELIZABETH BOWEN 45

Miss Cora Greene WALTON HALL SMITH 81

C"**The Ace of Cads**" MICHAEL ARLEN 90
Illustration by LAWRENCE HERNDON

Onions (See page 183) OSCAR SCHISGALL 133
Illustration by ALBIN HENNING

Mr. Collin's Adventures
IV. **Mr. Collin's Holiday Agency** FRANK HELLER 167

Shrieking Silence ARTEMUS CALLOWAY 179

THREE SERIALS

The Citadel (See page 183) JOSEPH HUSBAND 9
Illustrations by C. G. GAUL

The Devonshers HONORÉ WILLSIE MORROW 51
Illustrations by ERNEST FUHR

One-Way Street BEALE DAVIS 146
Illustration by W. G. RATTERMAN

OTHER FEATURES—Everybody's Chimney Corner, 183; Prose and Worse, by Gridley Adams, 185; Everybody's Chestnut Tree, 187.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY THE RIDGWAY COMPANY

JAMES H. GANNON, President
C. H. HOLMES, Secy. & Treas.

SPRING AND MACDOUGAL STREETS, NEW YORK, N. Y.

6, Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, London, W. C., England

Entered as Second-Class Matter, August 16, 1899, at the Post-Office, New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Entered as Second-Class Matter at the Post-Office Department, Ottawa, Canada. Yearly subscription, $2.50, in advance. Single copy, twenty-five cents. Foreign postage, $1.00 additional. No extra postage for Canada.

EVERYBODY'S takes all reasonable precautions for handling manuscripts submitted, but assumes no responsibility for their safety.
Copyright, 1924, by The Ridgway Company, in the United States and Great Britain. Entered at Stationers' Hall, London, England.

Maud Tousey Fangel
IVORY

Baby's Skin must be Soft and Yielding

HE is always reaching, striving, stretching,—a veritable little gymnast—intently determined on the baby task of growing up.

By this characteristic activity he is stretching constantly that delicate skin of his to take care of the growth of his body, and you must help him all you can. Keep his skin soft, clean and healthy, that the active little body may exercise in perfect comfort.

In his authoritative book on the "Baby's First Two Years," after advising a pure, white soap, Dr. Richard M. Smith of Boston says: "A normal, healthy baby should be bathed daily; the body thoroughly soaped and dipped into the warm water."

For almost a half century doctors have specifically recommended Ivory Soap as *pure, white and* safely mild for baby's daily bath. Ivory may be used freely for every intimate baby purpose.

Only a soap as mild and gentle as Ivory should be used also for the constant laundering of delicate babywear. "Little woolens," says the same authority, "should be washed by soft squeezing with the hands in *warm water and Ivory soapsuds*, then rinsed in several waters of the same temperature. Cotton garments should be washed on a washboard with *Ivory soapsuds and hot water.*"

Ivory is a really safe soap both for baby and for his clothes.

PROCTER & GAMBLE

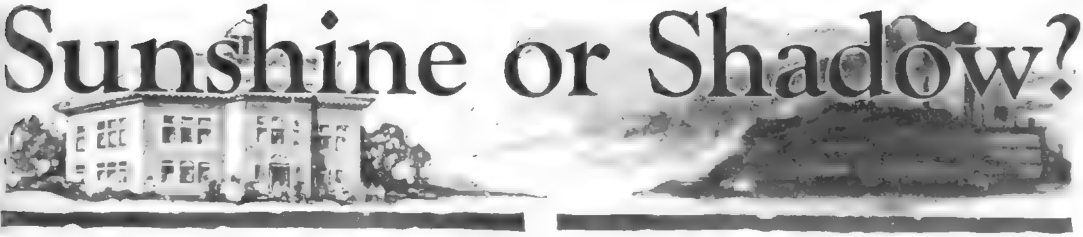
IVORY
SOAP

99⁴⁴⁄₁₀₀% PURE IT FLOATS

© 1924, by The Procter & Gamble Co., Cincinnati

Advertising section continued in rear of book

Sunshine or Shadow?



LUCKY boys and girls—graduating this month! Born lucky because God gave them fathers and mothers who have the love, the courage and the financial ability to see that their children are properly educated.

It is hard to believe that any father could care so little about the future of his children that he would let them give up school and go to work too soon if he could possibly prevent it.

And yet, right here in the United States where children are supposed to be better cared for than anywhere else in the world, there are more than 1,000,000 children between the ages of 10 and 16 at work—many of them laboring at health-wrecking and mind-dwarfing drudgery in factories, mines, shops and mills, on farms and in cities!

* * * *

All of the experts on health and education agree that children should be kept in school until they are at least 14. Every right-minded man and woman will agree on that point. Whether or not some children between 14 and 16 should drop all study and go to work is a grave question. But no one will deny that all of these youngsters need hours for play while they are growing—for the right play helps to build strong, healthy bodies. Now what are the facts? Here they are, furnished by the United States Census Bureau:

378,063 children between the ages of 10 and 14 are at work.

682,795 children between the ages of 14 and 16 are at work.

Remember, the Census figures show only those children reported by fathers and mothers. Investigators know that there are thousands of children from 4 to 10 years old whose work at home is hidden from the Census takers. No one can know the exact number.

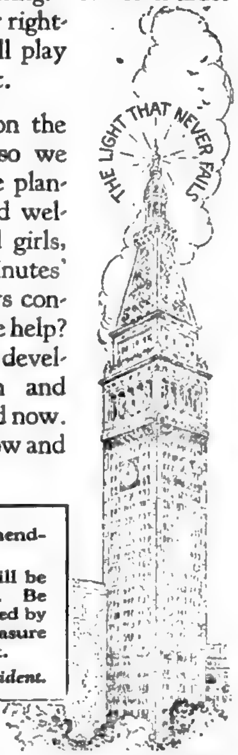
All through these bright sunshiny days when the beautiful green world is calling boys and girls to come and play—they drudge—perhaps a half million of them—mere children.

* * * *

Poor little souls, many of them doomed to live in the shadow of poverty and ignorance all their lives—what chance have they?

The number of children who are injured at work is appalling but not surprising. Children must play and when denied their rightful opportunities, they will play at their work and get hurt.

Most of us like to look on the sunny side of life—and so we should. But while we are planning for the happiness and welfare of our own boys and girls, can't we give just a few minutes' thought to the little toilers condemned to misery unless we help? Thousands of them can be developed into splendid men and women—if they are rescued now. Bring them out of the shadow and into the sunshine.


THE LIGHT THAT NEVER FAILS

Generally speaking—the states that give their children no protection or next to none have the greatest number of illiterates. They pay the price of their exploitation. Child labor in the United States has grown to alarming figures and will continue to grow until public opinion and humanity order it stopped. And apparently the only thing that can stop it everywhere and at once is the Child Labor Amendment to the Federal Constitution.

The time is coming when every state will be called upon to ratify the Amendment. Be ready to do your part to have it sanctioned by the Legislature of your state. It is a measure that should have your heartiest support.

HALEY FISKE, *President.*

Published by

METROPOLITAN LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY—NEW YORK

Biggest in the World, More Assets, More Policyholders, More Insurance in force, More new Insurance each year

"I am 62 years of age, and looked like 80—a fitter subject for the Old People's Home than an active, outside insurance solicitor. Constipation had been the bane of my life. My feet could hardly carry me along, and my conversational powers were exhausted during business hours. About 12 months ago I was recommended as a last resort to try Fleischmann's Yeast. I can hardly believe it, neither can my associates—that I am the same man of a year ago. 'You look and act like a man of forty,' say my friends today."
(A letter from Mr. Russell Carolan of St. Louis, Mo.)

"Five years ago as an office worker in Milwaukee, I could answer to the description of the 'run-down, nervous, suffering woman' in the patent medicine ads. My sallow complexion was my greatest worry and I was always troubled with constipation. I had taken medicine for four years, but the doctor said that drugs could not effect a permanent cure. Two years ago I learned from the girls in the office to eat Fleischmann's Yeast. Today I am frequently complimented on my fresh complexion."
(Extract from a letter of Mrs. Ella Fitzgerald of Ypsilanti, Michigan)

"A physical wreck—I was irritable, nervous, debilitated. I tried nearly every curative treatment known to science, but to no avail. I was simply depleted of nervous energy. When I heard of Fleischmann's Yeast I was skeptical of the wonderful results attributed to it. In a week's time, after using the yeast, my digestion became better, my complexion brighter, and I slowly regained lost vitality. Is it any wonder that I am a convert to the curative qualities of Fleischmann's Yeast?"
(Mr. Clair C. Cook, of Los Angeles, California)

You may not realize its amazing power

—Put this familiar food to work for you

These remarkable reports are typical of thousands of similar tributes to Fleischmann's Yeast.

There is nothing mysterious about its action. It is not a "cure-all," not a medicine in any sense. But when the body is choked with the poisons of constipation—or when its vitality is low so that skin, stomach, and general health are affected—this simple, natural food achieves literally amazing results.

Concentrated in every cake of Fleischmann's Yeast are millions of tiny yeast-plants, alive and active. At once they go to work—invigorating the whole system, clearing the skin, aiding digestion, strengthening the intestinal muscles and making them healthy and active. *Health* is yours once more.

Dissolve one cake in a glass of water (just hot enough to drink)

EAT
FLEISCHMANN'S
YEAST
FOR
HEALTH

—before breakfast and at bedtime. Fleischmann's Yeast, when taken this way, is especially effective in overcoming or preventing constipation.

Or eat 2 or 3 cakes a day—spread on bread or crackers—dissolved in fruit juices or milk—or eat it plain.

Fleischmann's Yeast comes only in the tinfoil package—it cannot be purchased in tablet form. *All grocers have it.* Start eating it today! A few days' supply will keep fresh in *your* ice box as well as in the grocer's. Write us for further information or let us send you a free copy of our latest booklet on Yeast for Health. Address: Health Research Dept. Z-5, The Fleischmann Company, 701 Washington Street, New York.

Eveready focusing spotlight with the 300-ft. range No. 2674
Eveready tubular flashlight with the moulded bull's-eye lens No. 2631
Eveready aluminum flashlight—fits both pocket and pocket-book No. 2692
Eveready popular utility flashlight with wide-spread beam No. 2633
EVEREADY UNIT CELL FOR FLASHLIGHTS
Eveready Unit Cells, in 2 sizes, fit and improve all makes of flashlights.

2 fine flashlights—*new features*

TWENTY-TWO fine flashlights in the four general types illustrated above. New designs. New features. New reasons for owning and enjoying the *perfect portable light for every purpose and purse.* There's the new safety-locking switch that cannot be turned on by accident. Then, there's the octagonal lens ring—better-looking, easier to screw on and off. Prevents rolling.

Cases are more handsome than ever. The new ribbon-pattern fibre case is practical as well as good-looking. Waterproof, warp-resisting. Some of these flashlights have beveled lenses; others have moulded bull's-eyes. Standard Eveready features are retained, of course. No change in prices—65 cents to $4.50, complete with battery—anywhere in U. S. A. Buy these improved Eveready Flashlights from electrical, hardware and marine supply dealers, drug, sporting goods and general stores, garages and auto accessory shops.

EVEREADY
FLASHLIGHTS
& BATTERIES
—they last longer

Manufactured and guaranteed by
NATIONAL CARBON COMPANY, INC.
New York San Francisco
Canadian National Carbon Company
Limited, Toronto, Ontario

"What a whale of a difference just a few cents make!"
—all the difference
between just an ordinary cigarette and—FATIMA, the most skillful blend in cigarette history.

SELL OUR SHIRTS MAKE BIG MONEY

Quick Profits

Quick Money for You, Selling Shirts Direct From Factory. Big Profits in our Plan. No money—no experience demanded. Makers of finest shirts for 25 years. Better quality goods, snappy styles, newest patterns, fine finish and workmanship make "HILL" Shirts self-sellers, big repeaters. You take the profits—we do the rest. Act quickly.

Write for FREE SAMPLES

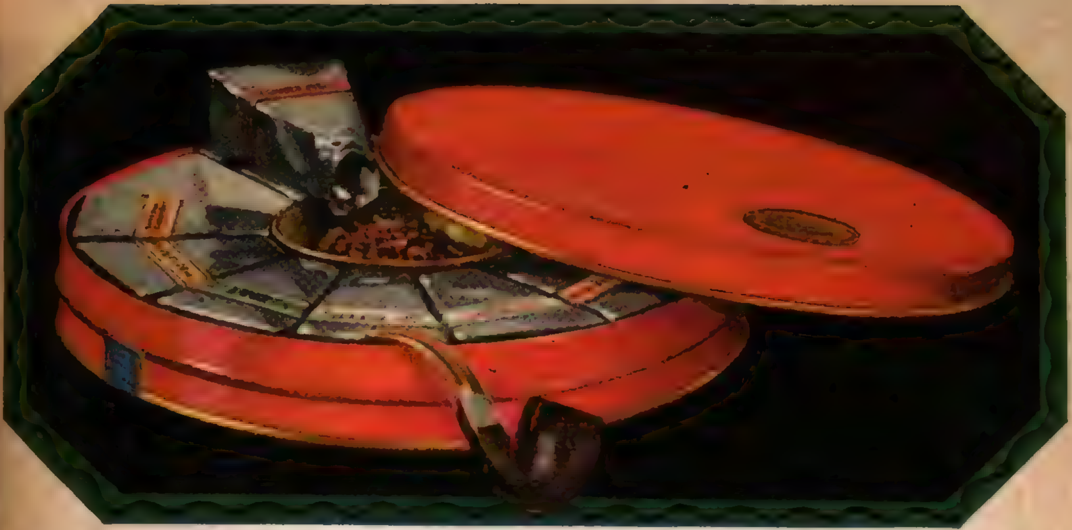
HILL SHIRT FACTORY
1550 N. Front Street, Philadelphia

BE AN ARTIST

WE CAN TEACH YOU DRAWING in your own home during your spare time. Twenty-five years of successful teaching proves our ability. Artists receive large salaries.

Write Today for Art Year Book

SCHOOL of APPLIED ART
ROOM No. 6 BATTLE CREEK MICH.



Get this, men-

A complete assortment of the world's fineſt smoking tobaccos — sent to any smoker anywhere — *on* 10 *days approval*

A new idea for Pipe-Smokers: 12 famous tobaccos, packed in a handsome Humidor—shipped to you direct to help you find the soul-mate for your pipe.

GUARANTEED BY

The American Tobacco Co

MOST men have written their John Hancocks on a lot of "dotted lines." But, if you're a pipe-smoker, we'll wager that you've never signed a fairer, sweeter contract than the little coupon at the bottom of this page.

Just a few strokes of your pen—and you can end your quest of years for a perfect smoking tobacco.

But we are getting ahead of our story.

A Teſt of the "12 Beſt" *for only* $1.50

If you were to try all 12 of these tobaccos in full size packages, the coſt would be:

Blue Boar . . .	.25
Capſtan	.30
Imperial Cube Cut .	.30
Herbert Tareyton . .	.25
Old English Curve Cut	.15
The Garrick . . .	.30
Carlton Club . . .	.15
Yale Mixture . . .	.25
Falk's Serene Mixture	.15
Three States . . .	.25
Will's Latakia . . .	.45
Louisiana Perique	.25
Total . .	$3.05

But through the *Humidor Sampler* you get a liberal "get acquainted" quantity of each for $1.50

The average pipe-smoker is the greatest little experimenter in the world. He's forever trying a "new one," confident that some day he'll find the real affinity for his pipe.

So we created the *Humidor Sampler* to meet his needs.

Into a bright red lacquered humidor case, we have packed an assortment of twelve famous smoking tobaccos—covering the whole range of smoking tobacco taste.

There are myriads of different *brands* of smoking tobaccos on the market. But of them all, there are 12 distinctive blends which, in our opinion, stand in a class by themselves for superlative flavor, aroma and quality.

These twelve decisive blends—the twelve "primary colors" of tobaccos—have been selected for the Humidor Sampler. When you have tried these twelve, you have tried the best; if your tobacco-ideal is to be found anywhere, it must be one of these "Twelve Best."

Ten-Day Approval Offer

We are eager to send the Humidor assortment to any smoker, anywhere, on ten days' approval.

Send no money. Just sign and mail the coupon. That will bring you the Humidor assortment direct from our factories to your den. When the postman brings the package, deposit $1.50 with him, plus postage.

If a ten-day try-out of these tobaccos doesn't give you more real pipe pleasure than you've ever had before, simply return the Humidor, and you'll get your $1.50 and the postage back *pronto*—and pleasantly.

Send No Money—Just Mail Coupon

The American Tobacco Co., Inc., Marburg Branch
Dept. 104, Baltimore, Md.

Please send me, on 10 days' approval, one of your Humidor Samplers of twelve different smoking tobaccos. I will pay postman $1.50 (plus postage) on receipt—with the understanding that if I am not satisfied I may return Humidor in 10 days and you agree to refund $1.50 and postage by return mail.

Name..

Address..

City.. State......................

Note:—If you expect to be out when postman calls you may enclose $1.50 with coupon and Humidor will be sent to you postpaid.

100 cigarettes for 15¢

GENUINE

BULL DURHAM

Settle the cigarette question by rolling your own from BULL. You get more flavor, more tobacco taste, more enjoyment — and much more for your money—

2 bags for 15c

Guaranteed by The American Tobacco Co. INCORPORATED

ED. PINAUD'S LILAC

Exquisite.

ED. PINAUD'S *famous* Lilac Vegetal

Is the world's favorite perfume. Exquisite in quality; used for handkerchief, atomizer and bath. Women love it.

Lilac is also the best, most refined perfume for men. After shaving it is a real delight. Use it also after the shower bath.

ED. PINAUD'S HAIR TONIC

The original French Eau de Quinine, this superior preparation appeals to all men and women of refinement. Beautifies the hair and keeps the scalp healthy and clean.

Apply ED. PINAUD'S hair tonic faithfully and watch your hair improve. Wonderful for dandruff and falling hair. Notice its exquisite fragrance.

Write today for samples of these two famous toilet necessities. Send 10c to our American Offices, write name and address plainly. Try the samples then buy of any dealer.

Parfumerie ED. PINAUD

DEPT. A
American Import Offices
ED. PINAUD BLDG. NEW YORK

Try also ED. PINAUD'S latest creations:

Elixir Shampoo, **perfect quality, perfumed with the refined Eau de Quinine odor.**
Bath Salts, **for perfuming the bath with the fragrance of fresh Lilac blossoms.**

$95 An Hour!

"Every hour I spent on my I. C. S. Course has been worth $95 to me! My position, my $5,000 a year income, my home, my family's happiness—I owe it all to my spare-time training with the International Correspondence Schools!"

Every mail brings letters from some of the thousands of I. C. S. students telling of promotions or increases in salary as the rewards of spare-time study.

What are *you* doing with the hours after supper? Can you afford to let them slip by unimproved when you can easily make them mean so much? One hour a day spent with the I. C. S. will prepare you for the position you want. Yes, it will! Put it up to *us* to prove it. Mark and mail this coupon *now!*

INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOLS
Box 2606-B, Scranton, Penna.

Without cost or obligation, please tell me how I can qualify for the position or in the subject *before* which I have marked an X:

BUSINESS TRAINING COURSES

- ☐ Business Management
- ☐ Industrial Management
- ☐ Personnel Organization
- ☐ Traffic Management
- ☐ Business Law
- ☐ Banking and Banking Law
- ☐ Accountancy (including C.P.A.)
- ☐ Nicholson Cost Accounting
- ☐ Bookkeeping
- ☐ Private Secretary
- ☐ Spanish ☐ French
- ☐ Salesmanship
- ☐ Advertising
- ☐ Better Letters
- ☐ Show Card Lettering
- ☐ Stenography and Typing
- ☐ Business English
- ☐ Civil Service
- ☐ Railway Mail Clerk
- ☐ Common School Subjects
- ☐ High School Subjects
- ☐ Illustrating ☐ Cartooning

TECHNICAL AND INDUSTRIAL COURSES

- ☐ Electrical Engineering
- ☐ Electric Lighting
- ☐ Mechanical Engineer
- ☐ Mechanical Draftsman
- ☐ Machine Shop Practice
- ☐ Railroad Positions
- ☐ Gas Engine Operating
- ☐ Civil Engineer
- ☐ Surveying and Mapping
- ☐ Metallurgy
- ☐ Steam Engineering
- ☐ Radio
- ☐ Architect
- ☐ Architects' Blue Prints
- ☐ Contractor and Builder
- ☐ Architectural Draftsman
- ☐ Concrete Builder
- ☐ Structural Engineer
- ☐ Chemistry ☐ Pharmacy
- ☐ Automobile Work
- ☐ Airplane Engines
- ☐ Navigation
- ☐ Agriculture and Poultry
- ☐ Mathematics

Name...

Street Address.................................... 3-6-24

City.............................State...................

Occupation...

Persons residing in Canada should send this coupon to the International Correspondence Schools Canadian, Limited, Montreal, Canada.

She Found A Pleasant Way To Reduce Her Fat

She did not have to go to the trouble of diet or exercise. She found a better way, which aids the digestive organs to turn food into muscle, bone and sinew instead of fat.

She used *Marmola Prescription Tablets* which are made from the famous Marmola prescription. They aid the digestive system to obtain the full nutriment of food. They will allow you to eat many kinds of food without the necessity of dieting or exercising.

Thousands have found that the *Marmola Prescription Tablets* give complete relief from obesity. And when the accumulation of fat is checked, reduction to normal, healthy weight soon follows.

All good drug stores the world over sell *Marmola Prescription Tablets* at one dollar a box. Ask your druggist for them, or order direct and they will be sent in plain wrapper, postpaid.

MARMOLA COMPANY
283 Garfield Bldg., Detroit, Mich.

BUNIONS

PEDODYNE, the marvelous new Solvent, banishes Bunions. The pain stops almost instantly. The Hump vanishes as though by magic. THEN YOU WILL HAVE SHAPELY FEET.

SENT ON TRIAL

I want you to have relief from Bunions. I want you to know the pleasure of foot comfort. I will gladly arrange to send you a box of Solvent to try. Simply write and say, "I want to try PEDODYNE." Address—

KAY LABORATORIES, Dept. L-685
186 N. La Salle St. Chicago, Illinois

FREE HELP For WRITERS

Stories, Poems, Plays, etc., are **wanted for publication.** Everyone who writes or **wants to write** needs our FREE Copyright Book, "The Key to the Editor's Desk." It points the way to **success and independence.** Write for this Free Book TODAY or submit manuscripts.

LITERARY BUREAU, - - 126, HANNIBAL, MO.

Dr. Esenwein

SHORT-STORY WRITING

A PRACTICAL forty lesson course in the writing and marketing of the Short Story taught by Dr. J. Berg Esenwein, Editor of The Writer's Monthly. *150 page catalog free. Please address:*

The Home Correspondence School
Dept. 347 Springfield, Mass.

Bathe the skin the Fairy way!

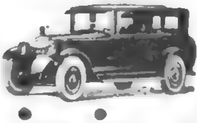
A BATH with Fairy Soap is a delightful experience! The rich, foamy, delicately fragrant lather is produced in a jiffy.

And you really are clean and refreshed and invigorated—because Fairy Soap acts that way on the skin. The whitest soap in the world—and as pure as it is white! White clear through. Nothing in it but the finest, purest ingredients. A real aid to permanent skin health, whether used for the toilet or bath.

And remember—the oval cake is economical because it wears down to a thin wafer without breaking.

It's white! It's pure! It floats!

FAIRY SOAP



What Brake Lining came on *your* Car?

YOU may not know what make of lining your manufacturer supplied. But it is mighty important to know that your brakes stay ready to meet each new emergency of modern motoring.

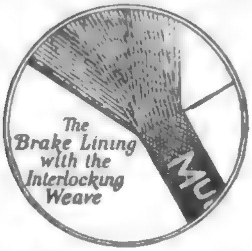
Multibestos, the Brake Lining with the Interlocking Weave, is so dependable at all times, and *lasts for such a long time,* that the makers of a majority of America's cars specify it as original factory equipment.

When you have your brakes relined, ask for Multibestos.

MULTIBESTOS

THE BRAKE LINING

with the Interlocking Weave


The Brake Lining with the Interlocking Weave
MU

New Auto Maps, only 10c

RAND McNALLY & CO., America's best-known map makers, have just printed a new series of absolutely up-to-date Touring Maps, covering every state. By special arrangement, for a short period, we can send you any states you wish for only 10c per map, in return for address of dealer or shop where you have your brakes relined. Order now. Specify sections or states you want.

MULTIBESTOS COMPANY
Dept. A. F. 6, Walpole, Mass., U. S. A.

Stirrup cups belong

to the past—they're old fashioned.

Crawford Shoes are up to the minute—in style right now. They're men's shoes built to suit a man's tastes—

They won't run over or get out of shape, they'll stand the gaff of service, and they'll always look right!

Men who don't wear Crawford Shoes are missing something worth while—

But don't take our word, try on a pair and see.

Drop in on the Crawford dealer in your neighborhood (he runs the best shoe store in the vicinity) and see for yourself the value you get in

The Crawford *Shoe*

MOST STYLES

$8

CHARLES A. EATON
SHOE INDUSTRIES
BROCKTON, MASS.

© [illegible]

SELL TIRES

DIRECT FROM FACTORY

We want an auto owner in each locality to advertise Armour Cords. You can make big money and get your own sample Tires Free, by sending us orders from friends and neighbors. No capital or experience needed. We deliver and collect direct. Pay you daily.

Most Liberal Tire Guarantee Ever Written

Armour Cords guaranteed by Indemnity Bond against Blow Out, Wear and Tear, Stone Bruise, Tread Separation, Blistering and Rim Cut for 12,500 miles. We are actual manufacturers. Write today for great Special Offer to Agents, and low Factory Prices.

ARMOUR TIRE & RUBBER CO., Dept. 553, Dayton, O.

BIG MONEY **AND FAST SALES. Every Owner Buys** Gold Initials for his auto. You charge $1.50, make $1.35. Ten orders daily easy. Write for particulars and free samples. **AMERICAN MONOGRAM CO., Dept. 44, East Orange, N. J.**

Be Our Representative

Make More Money---No Experience Necessary
Complete Educational Course Sent FREE!

PAN AMERICAN
LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY
New Orleans

Total Resources Thirteen Million Dollars

Pan-American Policies

include all forms of standard policies, sub-standard policies, child's Educational Endowment, Group Insurance and cancellable Accident and Health Insurance.

All Pan-American Policies are non-participating, thus enabling policyholders to have the benefit from the start of the lowest possible premium rates.

Pan-American policies contain all up-to-date policy provisions, which include most liberal cash surrender values, paid up insurance values, loan values, one of the most liberal total disability benefits offered in America as well as Double Indemnity features when desired.

Capital $1,000,000

Surplus $900,000

Paid Up Insurance in Force: $108,000,000

Insurance Written in 1923: $31,000,000

CRAWFORD H. ELLIS
President

E. G. SIMMONS
Vice Pres. and Gen. Mgr.

Unusual Offer to Full or Part-time Representatives

Let this old line legal reserve Company show you how to make more money.

There is no business which offers greater opportunities for "independence" than the life insurance profession. **No previous experience necessary.**

We are now ready to offer to responsible men and women a most complete **FREE EDUCATIONAL COURSE,** consisting of more than twenty carefully prepared booklets, dealing with every phase of the selling side of the business. These lessons are written so they may be easily understood, and they enable new men in the business to sell insurance from the start.

You may work part time, you may keep your present position until you see your way clear to devote all your time to representing Pan-American. Our home office is ever ready to counsel, advise, and show you how.

Our officers, who have spent a lifetime in the business, our field men and our years of experience are at your disposal.

Our sales planning department secures prospects for our representatives. We do everything possible to make the way easy.

Life Insurance salesmanship is truly work of the highest character. Can you imagine any higher or finer occupation? It is one into which you can put your whole heart and soul with never a doubt—or a fear—or an "if" or a "perhaps."

Remember, our course of instruction is absolutely free.

Send the coupon below, NOW, Today, and get started on the road to a bigger, more successful life. Later we will have one of our experienced men visit you and advise you and show you how.

What These Men Have Done, You Can Do.

N. G. McKINLEY, real estate, Richmond, Ind., writes: "I do not spend more than fifteen hours a week. * * * I find that my commissions figured better than $200.00 a month and which I must admit was surprising to me."

S. S. HURLBUT, bank cashier, Ferris, Tex.: "I have written about $300,000 and my profits have been more than satisfactory."

A. G. STAMPS, fire insurance, Earle, Ark.: "I believe my commissions on life insurance have averaged $125.00 a month since I made a contract with your company in 1917."

O. C. BRUNER, school teacher, Louisville, Ky.: "I spend one hour a day soliciting life insurance on which I realize about $70 per month. * * * I enjoy it very much and feel anyone is bound to succeed with all the good things Pan-American furnishes."

L. R. THOMASON, Ball Ground, Ga.: "I had made up my mind that it was fearfully hard to sell; however, I found it easy."

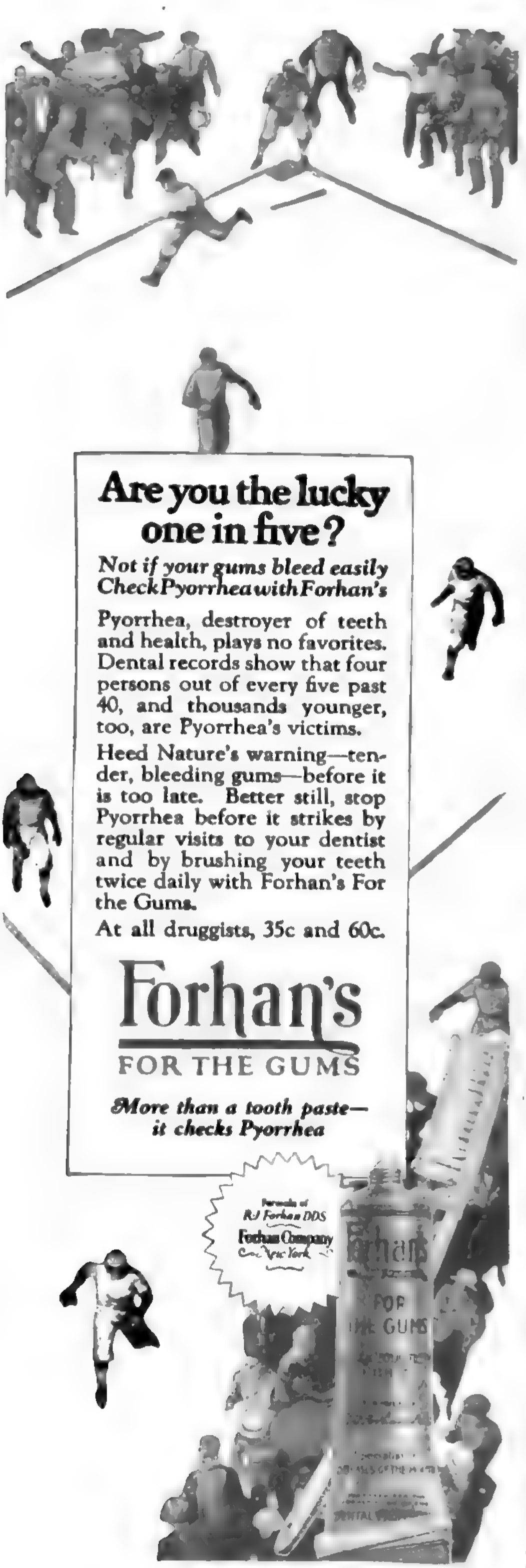
Pan-American is a Nationally Known Institution

MAIL THIS COUPON TODAY

PAN-AMERICAN LIFE INSURANCE CO.
DEPT. 18 NEW ORLEANS, LA.

Name..Address..

City..State....................Age..............Occupation..............



Are you the lucky one in five?

Not if your gums bleed easily Check Pyorrhea with Forhan's

Pyorrhea, destroyer of teeth and health, plays no favorites. Dental records show that four persons out of every five past 40, and thousands younger, too, are Pyorrhea's victims.

Heed Nature's warning—tender, bleeding gums—before it is too late. Better still, stop Pyorrhea before it strikes by regular visits to your dentist and by brushing your teeth twice daily with Forhan's For the Gums.

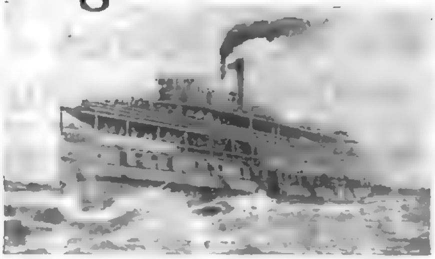
At all druggists, 35c and 60c.

Forhan's

FOR THE GUMS

More than a tooth paste—it checks Pyorrhea

Niagara to the Sea



Shooting the Rapids

The most satisfying trip in America for health and recreation. Almost 1,000 miles of lakes, rivers and rapids, including the Thousand Islands, the exciting descent of the marvelous rapids, the historic associations of Montreal, quaint old Quebec, with its famous miracle-working Shrine of Ste. Anne de Beaupré and the renowned Saguenay River with its stupendous Capes, "Trinity" and "Eternity," higher than Gibraltar.

Send 2c postage for illustrated booklet, "Niagara to the Sea," including map and guide, to JOHN F. PIERCE, Pass. Traffic Manager, Canada Steamship Lines, Ltd., 221 C. S. L. Building, Montreal, Canada.

CANADA STEAMSHIP LINES

PANTLIND HOTEL

GRAND RAPIDS
The Furniture Capital of America

750 Rooms

Hotel PANTLIND
GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN
An entire city block of hospitality

In comfort, service and appointments—and in the excellence of its several restaurants—the Pantlind ranks among the finest hotels in America. Those who best know Grand Rapids, stay at the Pantlind.

Fred Z. Pantlind, President

The Quickest Breakfast

QUICK QUAKER

Cooks in 3 to 5 minutes

Are you one of the wives or mothers who know you *should* serve oats often, but don't because of limited cooking time?

Quaker Oats experts have perfected a new Quaker Oats—Quick Quaker. So your grocer now has two styles of Quaker Oats.

Quick Quaker cooks perfectly in half the time of coffee. Takes scarcely longer than simple toasted bread.

So start the day now with a hot breakfast—with Quaker Oats, the premier vigor breakfast of the world, steaming, flavory and enticing.

Quick Quaker is flaked from the same queen oats as regular Quaker Oats. The only difference is that the grains are cut before flaking, rolled very thin and partly cooked. And these small flakes cook faster.

That rich Quaker flavor is there. All the good of hot breakfasts *quick*.

2 KINDS NOW

Ask for the kind of Quaker you prefer—Quick Quaker, or regular Quaker Oats. But be sure you get Quaker. Look for the picture of the Quaker on the package.

Quick Quaker

Cooks in 3 to 5 minutes

QUICK
QUAKER OATS
QUAKER
OATS

Quaker Oats

The kind you have always known

See the
Hudson

*The Ideal Route
Between*
NEW YORK and ALBANY

SIX splendid Day Line steamers—swift, modern, commodious—add to the delight of the journey. No matter in which direction you travel, convenient rail connections will enable you to include this wonder trip as a part of your itinerary. 150 miles of historic and scenic interest that have no equal on this continent.

**Daily including Sunday
May 17 to Oct. 19**

Also delightful one-day outings from New York. Rail tickets accepted Albany to New York and New York to Albany. Restaurant and orchestra on each steamer. Write for illustrated literature.

**Hudson River Day Line
Desbrosses Street Pier, New York**

Be Independent!

Hundreds of men are earning $5, $10—and more—each week *in their spare time* as special representatives of EVERYBODY'S and our three other leading publications. Men like yourself—who were *not* satisfied with small pay—who wanted their own homes, better clothes, happier families, are realizing these ambitions every day with our practical money-making plan.

These men are independent. Why not *you?* Let us train you to "corner" the subscription business of your community. The work is pleasant, dignified, and profitable. Big commissions and *a regular salary.* Write for your appointment—*now!*

Box 1087, Butterick Building, New York

The Test of Donald Norton
by Robert E. Pinkerton

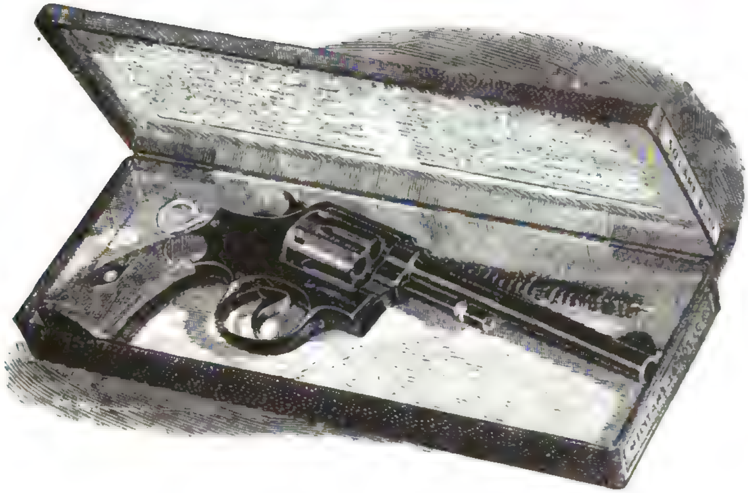
Romance and high adventure—flaming love and daring courage—unswerving fidelity to a great tradition—zealous devotion to a glorious ideal—the clash of primitive passions—all pictured by a master story-teller who uses the snow-swept barrens for his stage. Here is a book that marks high tide in fiction of the great North Woods.
The Test of Donald Norton is a vivid, strong, masterful story—a story that you will long remember.

AT ALL BOOKSTORES—$2.00
Publishers—REILLY & LEE—Chicago

109-113 W. 45th St. Hotel St. James **N. Y. City Times Sq.**
Midway between Fifth Avenue and Broadway
An hotel of quiet dignity, having the atmosphere and appointments of a well-conducted home.
Much favored by women traveling without escort. 3 minutes walk to 40 theatres and all best shops.
Rates and Booklet on application
W. JOHNSON QUINN

You can be quickly cured, if you
STAMMER
Send 10 cents for 288-page book on Stammering and Stuttering, **"Its Cause and Cure."** It tells how I cured myself after stammering 20 yrs. **B. N. Bogue, 2378 Bogue Bldg., 1147 N. Ill. St., Indianapolis.**

Get This Book **Tells How To Make $25 to $50 Week**
selling Clows' Famous Philadelphia Hosiery direct from mill to wearers. Pleasant, dignified work. Permanent income. Write today.
Geo. G. Clows Co., Desk 16, Philadelphia, Pa.



"SEEING is believing." But even the most faithful portrait of the Smith & Wesson revolver cannot tell the story of the arm so forcibly as can the arm itself. Any dealer will welcome an opportunity to put the revolver itself into your hands for your thorough examination; then alone will you understand why it has been known since 1853 as "SUPERIOR."

SMITH & WESSON

Manufacturers of Superior Revolvers

SPRINGFIELD
MASSACHUSETTS

Catalogue sent on request. Address Department M

No arms are genuine Smith & Wesson Arms unless they bear, plainly marked on the barrel, the name

SMITH & WESSON, SPRINGFIELD, MASS.

Western Representative: Andrew Carrigan Company, Rialto Bldg., San Francisco, Cal.
Los Angeles, Cal., Seattle, Wash.

High School Course in Two Years

This simplified, complete High School Course—specially prepared for home study by leading professors—meets all requirements for entrance to college and the leading professions.

30 Other Courses Whether you need High School training or specialized instruction in any trade or profession the American School can help you. Check and mail coupon for Free Bulletin.

American School
Drexel Ave. and 58th Street
Dept. HA-4
Chicago

American School, Dept. HA-4, Drexel Ave. and 58th St., Chicago.
Send me full information on the subject checked and how you will help me win success.

........Architect
........Building Contractor
........Automobile Engineer
........Automobile Repairman
........Civil Engineer
........Structural Engineer
........Business Manager
........Cert. Public Accountant
........Accountant and Auditor
........Bookkeeper
........Draftsman and Designer
........Electrical Engineer
........Electric Light & Power
........General Education
........Vocational Guidance
........Business Law
........Lawyer
........Machine Shop Practice
........Photoplay Writer
........Mechanical Engineer
........Shop Superintendent
........Employment Manager
........Steam Engineer
........Foremanship
........Sanitary Engineer
........Surveyor (and Mapping)
........Telephone Engineer
........Telegraph Engineer
........High School Graduate
........Fire Insurance Expert
........Wireless Radio
........Undecided

Name..

Address..

END FOOT TROUBLES IN NATURES WAY

Makes feet smaller

Fallen Arches, Bunions, Foot Pains are caused by misplaced bones. Artificial supports may for a time relieve, but cannot correct these ills. You can bring back health to any part of your body only in nature's own way and not by the use of mechanical devices.

Nature does not need artificial support · it will do its own work with just a little kind treatment from you. Don't use rigid devices that act merely as "crutches."

Help Nature and Nature Will Help You Discovery of Chinese Scientist, in nature's way, revitalizes muscles, brings bones back into place, actually making your feet smaller. If you suffer from foot trouble or wish smaller feet, send ten cents for illustrated booklet.

CHING WONG CO. Dept. 486 151 5th Av. N.Y.

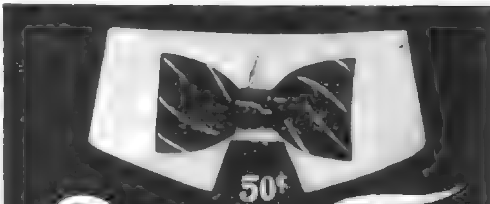
FORD RUNS 57 MILES ON GALLON OF GASOLINE

A new automatic and self-regulating device has been invented by John A Stransky, 2297 Fourth St., Pukwana, South Dakota, with which automobiles have made from 40 to 57 miles on a gallon of gasoline. It removes all carbon and prevents spark plug trouble and overheating. It can be installed by anyone in five minutes. Mr. Stransky wants agents and is willing to send a sample at his own risk. Write him today—Adv.

SEND US YOUR FILMS

Mail us 20c with any size film for development and six prints, or send us six negatives, any size, and 20c for six prints. Trial 5x7 enlargement in handsome folder, 25c. Overnight Service.

ROANOKE PHOTO FINISHING CO.
268 Bell Ave. Roanoke, Va.



Spur Tie

Pat. Jan. 29 1924 Reg U.S. Pat Off

HOLDS ITS SHAPE!

ALL day long—or through the evening dance—the Spur Tie holds its shape. Doesn't curl, roll or wrinkle. An exclusive patented feature makes this possible.

ALL TIED FOR YOU

The Spur Tie comes all tied for you by hand. A host of patterns—two sizes—and either pointed or square end models, to choose from.

BE SURE YOU GET THE GENUINE
LOOK FOR THE NAME SPUR ON THE TIE

Write for Style Book C

HEWES & POTTER, Boston, Mass.
Makers of BULL-DOG
Suspenders and Garters, Guaranteed 365 Days
Bull-Dog Belts and Vestoff Suspenders
On the Pacific Coast
Paul B. Hay, 120 Battery St., San Francisco, Cal.

FRECKLES

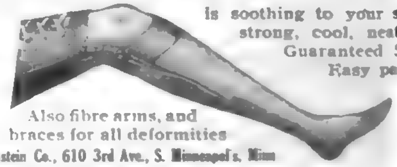
Now Is the Time to Get Rid of These Ugly Spots

There's no longer the slightest need of feeling ashamed of your freckles, as Othine—double strength—is guaranteed to remove these homely spots.

Simply get an ounce of Othine from any druggist and apply a little of it night and morning and you should soon see that even the worst freckles have begun to disappear, while the lighter ones have vanished entirely. It is seldom that more than an ounce is needed to completely clear the skin and gain a beautiful, clear complexion.

Be sure to ask for double-strength Othine, as this is sold under guarantee of money back if it fails to remove freckles.

BUCHSTEIN'S FIBRE LIMB



is soothing to your stump,—strong, cool, neat, light. Guaranteed 5 years. Easy payments.

Also fibre arms, and braces for all deformities

Send for Catalog Today

E. Buchstein Co., 610 3rd Ave., S. Minneapolis, Minn.

Inventions Commercialized

for inventors and manufacturers. Models—Drawings—Contract manufacturing. If you want to buy or sell an invention write
ADAM FISHER MFG. CO. 51, St. Louis, Mo.

How Do You Look In a Bathing Suit?

The good old swimming days are here. Oh, boy! But it's great to rip off the old shirt, into your suit and—SPLASH!! But what a shock to some of the poor girls when they see their heroes come out with flat chests and skinny arms instead of the big, husky frames they expected to see.

You Are Out of Luck

Don't try to make excuses. You are just out of luck. It's your own fault. You can't blame anyone but yourself. What are you going to do? She is going to find you out.

A Physique to Be Proud Of

It's not too late. Snap into it and I can save you yet. It means hard work and plenty of it, but—wait till you see the results.

The Muscle Builder

My job is to build muscle. That is why they call me The Muscle Builder. In just 30 days I am going to add one full inch to your biceps. Yes, and two inches on your chest in the same length of time. But that's only a starter. I am going to broaden out those shoulders and shoot a quiver up your old backbone. I am going to put a man's neck on you and a pair of legs to balance the strong sturdy body they support. You will have a spring to your step and a flash to your eye, radiating the dynamic life within you. Before summer is past you will never recognize your former self. You will have a strong, sturdy, virile body to be really proud of. You will be admired for your perfect manhood—while others are given glances of pity and scorn. This is no idle prattle, fellows. I don't just promise these things. I guarantee them. Are you with me? Let's go! Time is short and we have a job to do.

Earle E. Liederman
America's Leading Authority on Physical Education

Send for My New 64-page Book

"MUSCULAR DEVELOPMENT"

IT IS FREE

It contains forty-three full-page photographs of myself and some of the many prize-winning pupils I have trained. Some of these came to me as pitiful weaklings, imploring me to help them. Look them over now and you will marvel at their present physiques. This book will prove an impetus and a real inspiration to you. It will thrill you through and through. All I ask is 10 cents to cover the cost of wrapping and mailing and it is yours to keep. This will not obligate you at all, but for the sake of your future health and happiness, do not put it off. Send today—right now, before you turn this page.

EARLE E. LIEDERMAN
Dept. 5006, 305 Broadway, New York City

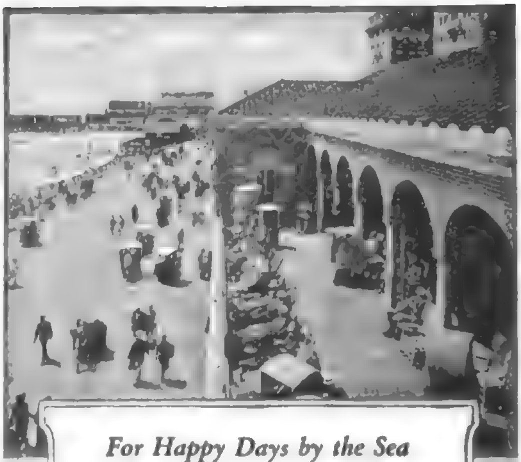
EARLE E. LIEDERMAN
Dept. 5006, 305 Broadway, New York City

Dear Sir:—I enclose herewith 10 cents, for which **you are to send me, without obligation on my part whatever, a copy of your latest book, "Muscular Development."**

Name..

Street..

City.................... State..............
(Please write or print plainly)



For Happy Days by the Sea

CHALFONTE-HADDON HALL

ATLANTIC CITY

Under their broad deck porches, along the famous Boardwalk, the world passes in review. Merry crowds throng the broad white beach. The sea rolls in, bringing health and tingling life in its salty tang and soothing sound.

A thousand fascinating shops and amusements claim your interest. Or you can play golf on a sporty course, go yachting or fishing.

Then back to Chalfonte-Haddon Hall with keen appetite for a tempting meal, desire for perfect comfort and the companionship of delightful people.

For more than fifty years these two hospitable, homelike hotels, now combined in ownership and management, have been the choice of cultivated interesting people, bent on happy, health giving days by the sea.

American Plan Only. Always Open
Write for illustrated folder and rates

LEEDS and LIPPINCOTT
COMPANY

Let *Us* Pay Your Vacation Bills

DURING the next few months hundreds of men will earn all the vacation money they need as special representatives of ADVENTURE, THE DELINEATOR, EVERYBODY'S and THE DESIGNER.

Thousands upon thousands of subscriptions are due for renewal *right now.* Let us show you how easily you can get the orders in your community—*at a big profit.*

No experience is necessary. You begin making money as soon as you hear from us. Send the coupon for full particulars—*now!*

Manager, Staff Agencies Division,
Box 1085, Butterick Building, New York City

Name..

Street..

City.................................State.......................

FORDS-34 Miles

on Gallon of Gasoline with Air Friction Carburetor

We guarantee all other cars nearly double present mileage, power and flexibility, make hills on high formerly difficult on low. Models for any car, truck, tractor, marine or stationary engine. **Makes old cars better than new.** See wonderful mileage guarantees for other cars.

Ford	**34 mi.**	**Reo**	**24 mi.**	**Chevrolet**	**32 mi.**
Buick 4	**30 mi.**	**Chalmers**	**23 mi.**	**Maxwell (25)**	**30 mi.**
Buick 6	**24 mi.**	**Olds. 6**	**23 mi.**	**Nash 6**	**23 mi.**
Hudson	**20 mi.**	**Paige 6**	**20 mi.**	**Lincoln 8**	**17 mi.**
Hupp	**25 mi.**	**Oakland 6**	**24 mi.**	**Stdbkr Lt. 6**	**23 mi.**
Dodge	**28 mi.**	**Overland 4**	**32 mi.**	**Cole 8**	**17 mi.**

If your car is not mentioned here send name and model for particulars and our guarantee on it. AGENTS WANTED.

SENT ON 30 DAYS' FREE TRIAL

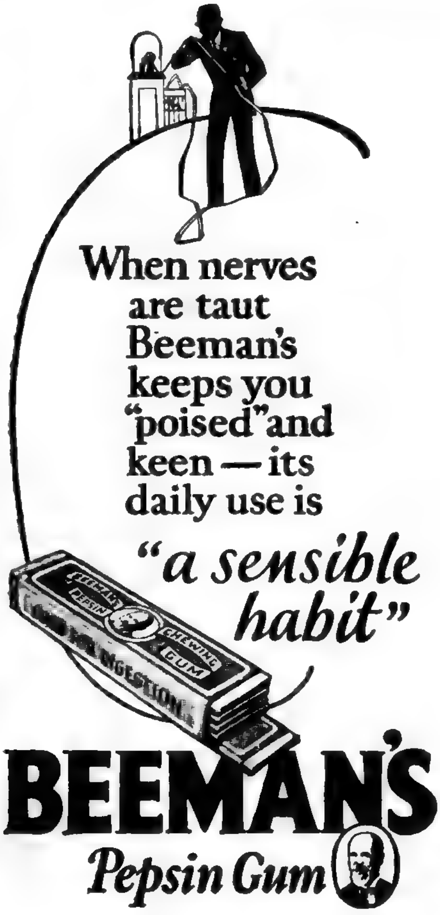
You can drive any car in heaviest traffic without shifting gears. Starts off on high in any weather without priming or heating—no jerking or choking. No more foul spark plugs or carbon in cylinders. No leaking of gas into crank case. Try it 30 days on our guarantee of money back if not entirely satisfied. **No strings to our guarantee. YOU ARE THE JUDGE.** Anyone who can handle a wrench can attach it. No boring of new holes or changing of operating mechanism. Write today.

AIR-FRICTION CARBURETOR CO.
932 Raymond Bldg. Dayton, Ohio, U. S. A.

Try This on Your Hair 15 Days

Let your mirror prove results.
Write for Liberal Trial Offer.

Your hair need not thin out, nor need you become bald, for there is a way to destroy the microbe that destroys the hair. This different method will stop thinning out of the hair, lifeless hair, remove dandruff itching, darken gray hair and threatened or increasing baldness by strengthening and prolonging life of the hair for men and women. Send your name now before it is too late for the 15 days' liberal trial offer.
AYMES CO. 3932 N. Robey St. M. 128 Chicago, Illinois



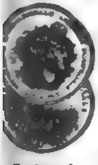
When nerves are taut Beeman's keeps you "poised" and keen — its daily use is *"a sensible habit"*

BEEMAN'S

Pepsin Gum

AMERICAN CHICLE CO.

Stop Using a Truss



Reduced Fac-Simile Gold Medal

Reduced Fac-Simile Grand Prix

STUART'S PLAPAO-PADS are different from the truss, being mechanico-chemico applicators made **self-adhesive** purposely to hold the distended muscles securely in place. **No straps, buckles or spring attached** —cannot slip, so **cannot** chafe or press against the pubic bone. Thousands have successfully treated themselves at home without hindrance from work—most obstinate cases conquered. **Soft as velvet—easy to apply—inexpensive.** Awarded old Medal and Grand Prix. Process of recovery is atural, so afterwards no further use for trusses. We rove it by sending Trial of Plapao absolutely **FREE**
Write name on Coupon and send **TODAY.**

lapao Co., 633 Stuart Bldg., St. Louis, Mo.

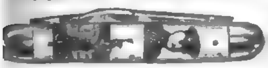
ame ....

ddress ....

eturn mail will bring Free Trial Plapao.

---

istrict Salesmen



Wanted, all or spare time. Earn $1500 to $3600 yearly. We train the inexperienced.

NOVELTY CUTLERY CO.
20 Bar St., Canton, Ohio

"They've tripled your salary, dear"

"I TELL you, Tom, it was a lucky day for both of us when you sent in that I. C. S. coupon. You'd never be where you are to-day if you hadn't decided to study in spare time just when you did."

Spare-time study with the I. C. S. is winning promotions for thousands of men and bringing happiness to thousands of homes all over the world. In offices, shops, stores, mines, mills and on railroads, I. C. S. trained men are stepping up to big jobs, over the heads of older men, past those whose only qualification is long service. There is a job ahead of YOU. Some man is going to be picked for it. The boss can't take chances. He is going to choose a trained man with sound, practical knowledge of the work.

Get busy right now and put yourself in line for that promotion. You can do it in spare time in your own home through the I. C. S., just as thousands of other men and women have done.

The first step they took was to mark and mail this coupon. Make *your* start the same way—and make it right now.

Mail the coupon to-day!

INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOLS
Box 2607-B, Scranton, Penna.

Without cost or obligation, please tell me how I can qualify for the position or in the subject *before* which I have marked an X:

BUSINESS TRAINING COURSES

☐ Business Management
☐ Industrial Management
☐ Personnel Organization
☐ Traffic Management
☐ Business Law
☐ Banking and Banking Law
☐ Accountancy (including C.P.A.)
☐ Nicholson Cost Accounting
☐ Bookkeeping
☐ Private Secretary
☐ Spanish ☐ French
☐ Salesmanship
☐ Advertising
☐ Better Letters
☐ Show Card Lettering
☐ Stenography and Typing
☐ Business English
☐ Civil Service
☐ Railway Mail Clerk
☐ Common School Subjects
☐ High School Subjects
☐ Illustrating ☐ Cartooning

TECHNICAL AND INDUSTRIAL COURSES

☐ Electrical Engineering
☐ Electric Lighting
☐ Mechanical Engineer
☐ Mechanical Draftsman
☐ Machine Shop Practice
☐ Railroad Positions
☐ Gas Engine Operating
☐ Civil Engineer
☐ Surveying and Mapping
☐ Metallurgy
☐ Steam Engineering
☐ Radio
☐ Architect
☐ Architects' Blue Prints
☐ Contractor and Builder
☐ Architectural Draftsman
☐ Concrete Builder
☐ Structural Engineer
☐ Chemistry ☐ Pharmacy
☐ Automobile Work
☐ Airplane Engines
☐ Navigation
☐ Agriculture and Poultry
☐ Mathematics

Name ....

Street Address 3-6-24

City .... State ....

Occupation ....

Persons residing in Canada should send this coupon to the International Correspondence Schools Canadian, Limited, Montreal, Canada.

Be Good to Your EYES

Like the hair, skin and teeth, one's EYES are deserving of regular care. A few drops of **Murine**, night and morning, will drive away dullness and keep them clear, bright and healthy. Absolutely harmless.

Write Murine Company, Dept. 61, Chicago, for FREE Eye Care Book

MURINE FOR YOUR EYES

$500 a year EXTRA

earned by many men in their spare time

Think what *you* could do with $500 *extra* every year! That's what scores of men are earning—all over the country—as special local representatives of EVERYBODY'S.

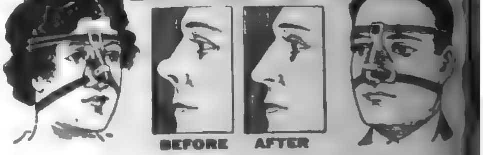
This pleasant work offers you a remarkable chance to earn $5, $10—and more—every week *in your spare time*. We are now engaging new representatives in every community. Do you want the appointment in your town? Write immediately—there is no obligation.

Box 1086, Butterick Building, New York City

Statement of the ownership, management, circulation, etc., required by the Act of Congress of August 24, 1912, of EVERYBODY'S MAGAZINE published monthly at New York, N. Y., for April 1, 1924. State of New York, County of New York, ss. Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared SEWELL HAGGARD, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the Editor of the EVERYBODY'S MAGAZINE, and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management (and if a daily paper, the circulation), etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, embodied in section 443, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse of this form, to wit: 1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business managers are: Publisher: THE RIDGWAY COMPANY, a Corporation, Spring and Macdougal Streets, New York City; Editor, SEWELL HAGGARD, 223 Spring Street, New York City; Managing Editor, none. Business Manager, JAMES F. BIRMINGHAM, 223 Spring Street, New York City. 2. That the owner is: (If the publication is owned by an individual his name and address, or if owned by more than one individual the name and address of each, should be given below; if the publication is owned by a corporation the name of the corporation and the names and addresses of the stockholders owning or holding one per cent or more of the total amount of stock should be given.) (*Owner:* THE RIDGWAY COMPANY, a Corporation, Spring and Macdougal Streets, New York City. *Stockholders:* FEDERAL PUBLISHING COMPANY, a Corporation, 15 Exchange Place, Jersey City, N. J., stockholders of FEDERAL PUBLISHING COMPANY; THE BUTTERICK COMPANY, a Corporation, Spring and Macdougal Streets, New York City, stockholders of BUTTERICK CO.; GEORGE B. BLACK, 812 Lincoln Avenue, Mendota, Ill.; S. R. LATSHAW, Butterick Building, New York City; LAURA J. O'LOUGHLIN, 514 West 114th Street, New York City; MRS. ARETHUSA POND, 575 Riverside Drive, New York City; ABBY L. WILDER, 43 5th Avenue, New York City; B. F. WILDER, Butterick Building, New York City; C. D. Wilder, Butterick Building, New York City; G. W. WILDER, Butterick Building, New York City. 3. That the known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: None. 4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders, and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear upon the books of the company but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting, is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association, or corporation has any interest direct or indirect in the said stock, bonds or other securities than as so stated by him. 5. That the average number of copies of each issue of this publication sold or distributed, through the mails or otherwise, to paid subscribers during the six months preceding the date shown above is (This information is required from daily publications only.) SEWELL HAGGARD, Editor. Sworn to and subscribed before me this 29th day of March, 1924. (Seal.) WM. DEWAR, JR., Notary Public, Kings County. Certificate filed in New York County. (*My commission expires March 30, 1924.*)

YOU HAVE A BEAUTIFUL FACE

But Your Nose!



IN THIS DAY AND AGE attention to your appearance is an absolute necessity if you expect to make the most out of life. Not only should you wish to appear as attractive as possible, for your own self-satisfaction, which is alone well worth your efforts, but you will find the world in general judging you greatly, if not wholly, by your "*looks*," therefore it pays to "look your best" at all times. **Permit no one to see you looking otherwise; it will injure your welfare!** Upon the impression you constantly make rests the failure or success of your life. Which is to be your ultimate destiny?

My newest greatly improved superior *Nose-Shaper*, "TRADOS MODEL 25" U. S. Patent, corrects now all ill-shaped noses, without operation, quickly, safely, comfortably and permanently. Diseased cases excepted. Model 25 is the latest in Nose Shapers and surpasses all my previous Models and other Nose Shaper Patents by a large margin. It has six adjustable pressure regulators, is made of light polished metal, is firm and fits every nose comfortably. The inside is upholstered with a fine chamois and no metal parts come in contact with the skin. Being worn at night it does not interfere with your daily work. Thousands of unsolicited testimonials on hand, and my fifteen years of studying and manufacturing Nose Shapers is at your disposal, which guarantees you entire satisfaction and a perfectly shaped nose.

(Above illustration represents my "Trade-Mark" and shows my first and oldest Nose Shaper. It is not a replica of my latest superior Model No. 25.)

Write today for free booklet, which tells you how to correct Ill-Shaped Noses without cost if not satisfactory.

M. TRILETY, Face Specialist **1988 Ackerman Bldg., Binghamton, N.Y.**

!

fear

Are you self-conscious about the impression you make on people?

FEAR is probably the greatest handicap anyone can have in life. It keeps you from being your own real self—from doing your downright best and from getting on in life as you should.

Personal appearance has a lot to do with the way you feel. Clothes count, of course. But still there is one thing so many people overlook—something that at once brands them as either fastidious or careless—*the teeth.*

Notice today how you, yourself, watch another person's teeth when he or she is talking. If the teeth are not well kept they at once become a liability.

Listerine Tooth Paste cleans teeth a new way. At last our chemists have discovered a polishing ingredient that really cleans without scratching the enamel—a difficult problem finally solved.

You will notice the improvement even in the first few days. And you *know it is cleaning safely.*

So the makers of Listerine, the safe antiseptic, have found for you also the really safe dentifrice.

What are your teeth saying about you today?—*LAMBERT PHARMACAL CO., Saint Louis, U. S. A.*

LISTERINE TOOTH PASTE

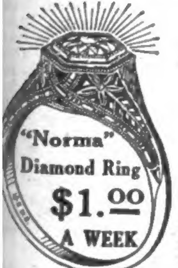
Large Tube—25 cents

Genuine Diamond

RING

Marvelous Value

Brilliant Blue White, Perfect Cut Diamond



$37.50

Cash or Credit

Mounting is 18-K Solid White Gold, Diamond set in hexagon top. A popular Engagement Ring. Cased in handsome ring box. Delivered on first payment of $1.00; then $1.00 a Week thereafter.

Money Back If Not Satisfied

OFTIS
BROS.&CO. EST'D. 1858

THE OLD RELIABLE ORIGINAL
CREDIT JEWELERS
DEPT. A-864
108 N. State St., Chicago, Ill.
Stores in Leading Cities

LEARN **ectricity** Great School of Coyne—complete in 3½ months. Big outlay of electrical equipment.

Free Railroad Fare

Enter anytime. Special limited offer. Drafting and Radio Free. *Send for big free catalog.* Act now!

Coyne Electrical School—Dept. A-141
1300-1310 West Harrison Street, Chicago, Illinois

ig Money Writing photoplays, stories, ms, songs. Send for free copy America's greatest gazine for writers. Tells you how to write and sell.

RITER'S DIGEST, 607 Butler Building, Cincinnati, Ohio

"I now enjoy all the convenience of naturally curly hair."
MISS DALE MARTIN,
125 S. 14th St.,
Quincy, Ill.

Illustrated booklet sent free on request.

Famous Nestle LANOIL Home Outfit for Permanent Waving

"Comes Up to Expectations"

"EVERY woman should know of the Nestle invention," write hundreds of enthusiastic Home Outfit purchasers—*and they are right.* For no other form of hair curling, whether nightly curlers, curling fluids or hot irons, can possibly approach the results of the Nestle Permanent Wave by the LANOIL Process. A single waving gives you permanent waves, curls and ringlets. And so simple and fool-proof is the Home Outfit that children can handle it.

Just imagine your hair naturally curly. Imagine how free you will feel when it looks pretty ALL THE TIME, and rain, bathing, perspiration and shampoos only make it prettier.

30 Days' Free Trial In Your Home

Send for your Home Outfit with free trial supplies today. Wave your hair, and if you are not satisfied with the results, return the Outfit, and every cent of its $15 cost, deposited with us or with your postman, will be refunded to you immediately.

You have the assurance of the Nestle LANOIL Company, established since 1905, that you will either get satisfactory, naturally curly hair, or your money back promptly and without question, so send this coupon, or a letter or postal for your Home Outfit today.

NESTLE LANOIL CO., Dept. V
Established 1905
12 and 14 East 49th Street, New York City
Just off Fifth Avenue

Fill in, tear off and mail coupon today

NESTLE LANOIL CO., LTD., Dept. V
12 & 14 East 49th St., New York, N. Y.

Please send me the Nestle LANOIL Home Outfit for Permanent Waving. I understand that if, after using the Outfit and the free trial materials, I am not satisfied, I may return the Outfit any time within 30 days, and receive back every cent of its cost of $15.

☐ I enclose $15 in check, money order, or bank draft as a deposit.
☐ I prefer to deposit the $15 with my postman when the Outfit arrives.
OR, check HERE.....if only free booklet of further particulars is desired.

Name..
Street..
City.......................... *State*..........

Where does the ice come from?

One advantage of a big organization is that it includes men who have specialized along many different lines. Thus, no matter what your electrical problem may be, there is someone among the 100,000 men and women of the General Electric Company who *knows* and is at your service.

Ice used to come from lakes and ponds—sometimes clean and sometimes not.

Today it comes from an artificial ice plant where electric hoists and ammonia compressors are operated by G-E motors. Jack Frost worked cheaply, but so does the G-E motor; and *it* works every day.

GENERAL ELECTRIC

Take a Kodak with you

You'd like to remember a day like this and pictures won't let you forget.

Any Kodak is convenient to carry, easy to work and fun to use; you'll get good pictures from the first

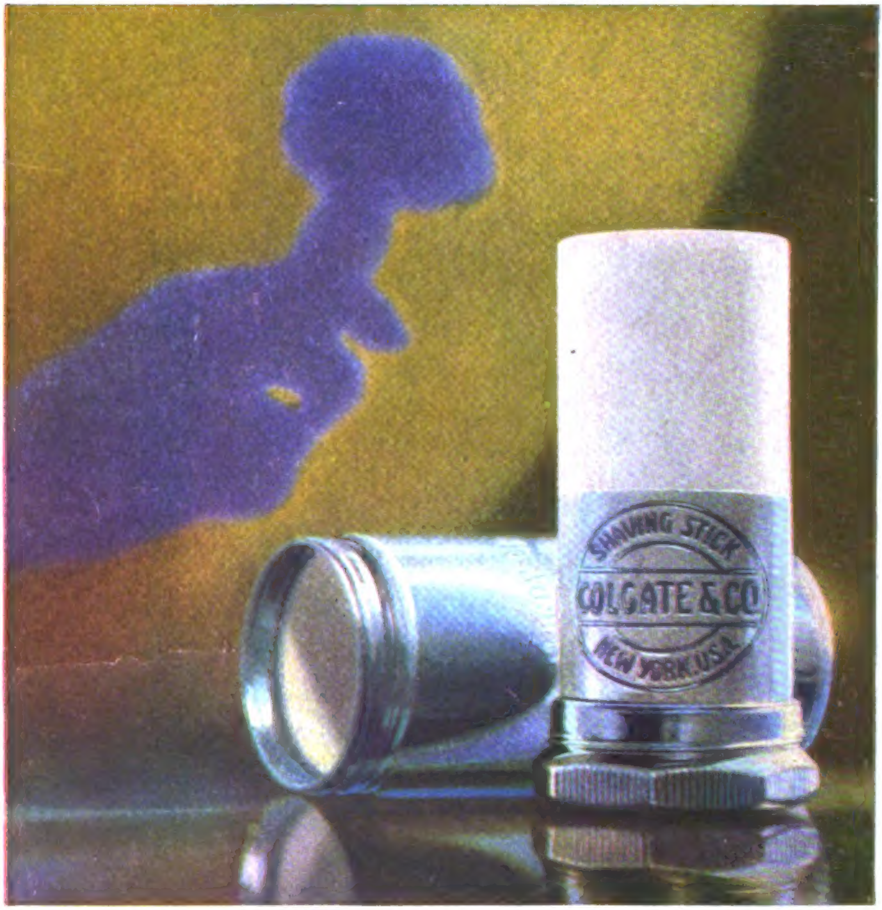
Autographic Kodaks *$6.50 up*
At your dealer's

Eastman Kodak Company, Rochester, N.Y., *The Kodak City*

COLGATE'S

Shaving Stick

"HANDY GRIP" AND REFILL



For Comfort, Convenience and Economy

When we say to you that the Shaving Stick has important advantages over shaving preparations in any other form, we can do so without bias, for we manufacture shaving sticks, powder and cream.

In its attractive nickel box, our "Handy Grip" Shaving Stick is most convenient for traveling. It will not crush when packed, and it makes a wonderful lather for *easy shaving*.

It is not uncommon for a Colgate Shaving Stick to last more than a year in daily use.

The famous "Handy Grip", with a trial-size shaving stick
in nickel box, sent for 10c. When the trial stick is gone,
buy Colgate "Refills" for the price of the soap alone, 25c.

COLGATE & CO. • *Established 1806* • **NEW YORK**

Truth in advertising implies honesty in manufacture